THE PULPIT AND THE PEW

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THE PULPIT AND THE PEW

LYMAN BEECHER LECTURES DELIVERED 1913, BEFORE THE DIVINITY SCHOOL OF YALE UNIVERSITY

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I

THE PREACHER AND HIS QUALIFICATIONS

Every man is the measure of his work and the measure of his word. He cannot do a work that outmeasures his own proportions, nor speak an effective word that is more eloquent than his own personality. Upon whatever line of service therefore a man enters, the prime question turns on stature.

If we are to understand by St. Paul's statement in First Corinthians 1: 27,—"God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things that are mighty,"—that God's preference is for feeble instruments, the Apostle is himself the refutation of what he asserts. Other things being equal, the rich soil will yield the finer fruit; the larger star will radiate the fuller light; the tougher log will emit the tenser heat. It has to be enkindled, of course, but once aflame the toughness of its fiber will determine the quantity and quality of its blaze.

It seems to have been sometimes thought—following perhaps what was imagined to be the leading of the passage just quoted—that while success in other departments of service depends on wealth of qualification, success in the pulpit is conditional upon

absence of aptitude, and that the weakest and most unpromising of the sons is thereby marked out for ministerial candidature.

Some years ago I was called upon by the widow of a late Presbyterian elder, who was for some years officially connected with one of the most prominent Presbyterian churches in New York City, a motherly old lady, who descanted with affectionate detail upon the membership of her home, and in particular upon her three sons, whom we will call Charles, James and Henry. Charles she described as especially gifted, both in physique and in vigor of intellectual and moral character. Him, she said, she had devoted to the law. Her second son, James, she represented to me as less complete in his general build than Charles, but surpassing either of her other children in initiative and acuteness, and him she had decided to put into business. The case of Henry she briefly disposed of by laconically remarking that she had given him to the Lord, absent-mindedly remarking, however, a little later in the conversation, that he was in no wise a promising child and that she was quite doubtful whether she would succeed in raising him. She was probably familiar with those passages of Old Testament Scripture that insist that only those animals that are unblemished and that are the finest shall be placed upon the altar of the Lord, but without

realizing, apparently, that blemished children are as far from measuring up to the sacrificial ideal as are blemished goats and lambs.

Passing by the entire question of physical equipment, as being too familiar to require rehearsal, we shall give primary attention to the matter of disciplined mentality, as the fundamental prerequisite to ministerial success. This is not with any view to showing disrespect to our candidates' moral and religious faculties, to which, by many and by most, perhaps, would be accorded the position of precedence.

Those faculties shall have due recognition; but however complete the moralization and the sanctification of the individual, their practical value and efficiency will depend upon the amount of the personal stuff to which they are respectively applied. The quality of the light in a sixteen-power electric candle is the same as in that of one of thirty-two power, but the latter will do more work and illuminate a wider area. And what we are after here is the largest possible results. The quality of the piety of a man of mediocre intelligence may be on a par with that of Luther, Calvin, Chalmers, Storrs, but its practical worth as an efficiency will be calculated only in terms of the results to which the piety contributes. And it is of results that we are here in

pursuit. And truth, intellectually discerned, appropriated and experienced, is the ultimate material out of which personal stuff is built up. Other ingredients certainly enter into the composition, just as something beside bricks is essential to the construction of a brick building, although it is bricks that are the constituent elements.

So we come back to it that it is by a process of thorough intellectual studentship that the foundation of ministerial efficiency is laid. In other words we are dealing with the same conditions here as when, instead of its being the case of a preacher, it is that of a lawyer or physician or of any other worker upon high personal grounds. In this case, as in all others, things being equal, it is intellectual strength and rich intellectual furnishings of the mind that are the measure of power. In keeping with the foregoing it is in point to suggest that it is quite to the advantage of one who is to eventuate as a preacher that he does not too early conceive a definite ministerial purpose. Some one having remarked that a youth who had arrived at the age of seventeen without having yet distinctly fixed upon his life work was a failure already, Mr. Beecher is reported to have retorted that any one at the age of seventeen who *had* distinctly fixed upon his life work was a failure already.

Very much of what has to be reckoned as unsuccess in all departments is due to meagerness of preparatory discipline—instability and contractedness in the fundamentals. It is an omen of good that the church is giving to this matter more and more careful regard. A man cannot do a thing well unless he is able to do something more than the one particular thing that he is specifically devoting himself to.

A speaker, for example, leaves upon our minds a dissatisfied impression if we are left suspecting that his effort is one in which he has exhausted his entire range of resource. We want to be able to keep ourselves well inside of our limitations. When I was a boy and wanted to go skating my father took pains to be sure that the ice was a little thicker than was absolutely necessary to keep me from falling through into the water.

Moses had already passed two thirds of his life before finally entering upon his mission. If the traditional view of the matter is correct, only ten per cent of our Lord's years were devoted to the Christian ministry; and, humanly viewed, if any one ever had reason to be in haste to get at his life work that one was he. If there were more of the same in the programme of men now entering the ministry, it

would save plucking from the tree fruit while it is still green.

There is no place where haste to be doing what one is going to spend his life in doing is more disastrous than the pulpit. That cases can still be cited where matters issued otherwise does not vitiate the principle for which we are just now contending. There is no vigor of mind that can be operated along any line of thought, that cannot be made to tell in the service of the pulpit. There is no sort of knowledge, whether of things celestial or terrestrial, of things divine or human, that cannot be utilized to the effectiveness of pulpit discourse. No sensible person ever commences preaching without wishing that underneath his effort were a wider and more solid basis of preparation.

There is no doubt but that the intellectualism involved in such preparation has its perils. Study easily becomes an end in itself. Students possessed of the spirit of research incur the danger of coming to seek knowledge for its own sake, regardless of the uses to which it may be put and ought to be put. It is much the same impulse, only working at a higher level, as prompts the money-getter, who earns for the joy of earning and for the joy he finds in his accumulations. There is in it much of the genius of miserliness, although working in an immaterial

commodity. But the nature of the commodity does not seriously modify the quality of the impulse. To be greedy of gold is no better than to be greedy of copper or brass.

I know of a theological seminary where, since the establishment of a fellowship entitling the first scholar in the class to two years of study abroad, almost every fellow has finally issued as a professor rather than as a preacher. That is a matter that in this presence needs to be touched with great delicacy, for it is one of those questions upon which much can be said on either side. It can be easily claimed that to make preachers in the classroom is greater than to make Christians in the pulpit.

If it be said that it would have been impossible to tie St. Paul down to a seminary, it has also to be said that Christ confined himself for the most part to making preachers, apostles. I mention both points of view, for I am not speaking as an advocate, nor trying to win a case. Yet I believe, if the entire truth be told in the instance just mentioned, that it was the scholarly impulse, fostered by prolonged years of study, rather than the pure evangelical passion that prompted the fellows to qualify themselves for professional work.

That is the natural tendency of study. There is an element of dryness in pure intellectual work which

easily diverts from service of warm personal endeavor except as it is continually moistened by influences of quite a distinct character. I recall the case of a man who had spent two years fitting for college, four years in college, three years in a chair of Greek, two years in study abroad, who upon returning to this country and consulting with a wise and trusted college professor as to the field of service in which he would best expend himself, received from him the unhesitating advice to devote a year or two to preaching the gospel, not with a view to remaining permanently in the ministry, but for the purpose of cultivating that affectional side of the nature which is certain to be neglected in strictly intellectual pursuits and which is essential to the balancing of character, and without which mere intellectual discipline is sure to fail of its finest and most valuable fruits.

The emotive faculty is so distinctly a feature of the human constitution that the wonder is that so little—even if any—respect is accorded to it, or emphasis paid upon it, in collegiate training, or, so far as I know, in the discipline of the seminary, although as regards the latter I am subject to correction. Of course, in the study of psychology the feelings are charted as combining with the intellect and the will to make out the complete geography of

the mind, exactly as Connecticut is scheduled with the five states to compose New England; but while the college curriculum is constructed with a definite view to building up the student on his intellectual side, I do not recall in my four years' submission to that curriculum a single suggestion as to the serious part played in life and in service by the emotive energies or to the necessity of developing them in parallelism with the cultivation of the powers of thought.

This matter will call for fuller treatment in another lecture, but could not be left without mention in our inventory of ministerial qualifications. Presumably my point of view upon entering into the work of the ministry was not markedly different from that of most inexperienced preachers, in supposing that men could be syllogized into the kingdom of heaven; that they could be snared in a sort of logical trap and transported at the impulse of an inevitable conviction.

One lesson that a theologue ought thoroughly to have learned prior to ordination is that while people have convictions they are not very much given to making use of them, and treat them—especially moral and religious ones—very much as they do bric-a-brac, which is designed rather for decoration than for consumption.

So that logically to have fastened a truth upon a

hearer's mind is no slightest guarantee of practical religious results. Iron cannot be hammered into shape when it is cold. Between frigid thought and sentiment that is gentle and tender, considered as moral dynamic, there is the same difference as between hailstones and raindrops viewed as means of fertilization.

It was my great privilege to know and to love the late Richard Salter Storrs. He has now been a long time gone, but my admiration for him as the prince of preachers grows with the years. A distinctly new quality entered into his discourses as time passed, as has been testified to by those who were his accustomed hearers.

His earlier sermons were rather in the nature of addresses, evidencing the thoroughness of his scholarship and distinguished for their massive elegance, for the wealth of their diction and for the masterly way in which his thoughts were marshaled. So that the responsive hearer—and all his hearers were responsive—retired from his pulpit service overwhelmed and sometimes well-nigh crushed by the staggering blows of his eloquence. And yet its splendor was rather the cold brilliancy of an icicle than the warm caressing flush of a summer sunset.

But as time passed over him, with that accompaniment of burden and bereavement that are the sure

attendants of the years, and with that mellowing influence, which, under such circumstance is certain to visit a soul as gifted and capacious as his, there entered a new note into the music of his discourse, a note that was soft and sweet, and one which, without trespassing upon the vigor of his thought, endowed it with the subtle power of gracious penetration, so that his words fell upon us with a certain majestic sweetness, that not simply touched our understandings but melted their way into our hearts.

There was a lesson, in pulpit service of that complex efficiency, which was bound to remain as a permanent possession of all who had the privilege, even though limitedly enjoyed, of coming within reach of its peculiar inspiration of commingled might and graciousness. The thought was there and the feeling was there, and yet married, each to each, in a way that created the consciousness of unity rather than of duality. It was a vitalized summary of the two ministerial qualifications thus far specified. Even as in the preaching of Christ, of St. Paul and of St. John, there were tears in his utterance even if not in his eye.

This is no plea for sentimentality, which is simply sentiment run riot, undisciplined hysteria, emotionalism gathered about no fixed intelligent point of crystallization. It is a demand rather for a culti-

vated and developed faculty of affection which shall be an easy match for a cultivated and developed faculty of thought, so that, while the action of the brain shall give support to the play of the heart, the play of the heart shall add luster and warmth to the action of the brain.

It having been indicated that it is one's personality that constitutes the foundation of one's fitness for ministerial service, it is a question of some difficulty and delicacy, requiring always to be solved, whether there exist those constitutional aptitudes that put one into natural relation with work of that order.

It should be laid down as a fundamental principle, applicable to all occupations, that the sanctity of a man's work does not depend on the nature of the work but on the character of the impulse inspiring it, and that all work is holy when done with a hallowed intent, done in loyal service to a Divine Master; so that different lines of engagement, if pursued in that spirit, are not to be classified into grades of unequal religious value.

A Christian broker, lawyer, manufacturer, who conducts his business in loyal observance of Christian principle, stands, in point of character and service, at the same level of sanctity as the clergyman, priest, evangelist or apostle possessed of the same consecration of purpose. The ideal Christian life is the same

for all. This truth if more distinctly impressed and emphatically urged would correct the notion that often lies in the minds of even Christian young men, when considering the question of vocation, that a lower degree of devotion is compatible with the Christian practice of the profession of law or of medicine or of any other secular pursuit, so called, than with that of the ministry; which means, of course, that it is a little more wicked for a minister to do what is not quite right than it is for a layman, and that it is prudent to work in a field where there is the broadest moral margin.

With the understanding then that all functions are holy functions if christianly exercised, and that in itself the calling of one who pleads before the bar is as holy a calling as that of one who preaches from the pulpit, we come back naturally to the proposition, stated a moment ago, that the question of one's life work is to be settled on the basis of constitutional aptitude, and that the Christian young man is under no kind of obligation to enter the ministry and ought not to enter the ministry, on the mere ground that he is a Christian, but on the ground that, added to that, he is by nature adapted to that character of service, if so be that he is so adapted.

We never do well that which we do not enjoy doing, that toward which our faculties of thought, feeling

and temperament do not converge with unanimity of assent. Success in the best sense of the term and in the higher lines of achievement, is unattainable, if, while certain of our powers throw themselves into effort with glad spontaneity, other of those powers stand by in frowning dissent. A man in order to do perfectly well must be unanimous. Such unanimity makes out a great deal of what is usually understood to be genius. Genius is energy at play. Energy at work is something else.

It would be of interest to know what percentage of those who preach are doing it because it is the thing they love to do and the only thing they want to do, or because they think it is the thing that they can do with least likelihood of failure. An acquaintance of mine said on a Saturday, "I am going to preach tomorrow, but if my late uncle's will, which is to be opened the coming week, reads as I think it does, the sermon that I preach tomorrow is the last one I shall ever deliver." The instance is probably an unusual one, but how unusual no one can say, for scarcely would any one be so insensible to the significance of the ministry and to its splendid opportunities of service as to be willing to confess that he availed of it merely as a bread-and-butter occupation.

It is through this medium of aptitude that God's purpose respecting us becomes known to us. It is in

that way primarily that his call reaches us, whether it be a call to the Christian ministry or to some other department of service. The word "calling" implies in itself a personal summons,—a fact of which we are unmindful when we use the term of occupation in general but associate the idea of God's purpose, and God's communication to us of his purpose, only with the work of the ministry.

We seem willing to pauperize other occupations in respect of their religious possibilities in order to secure funds for capitalizing the single profession of the preacher. Our religious appreciation lacks substance sufficient to cover the entire area, somewhat after the manner of the people in the Old Testament record with whom "God was the God of the hills but not the God of the valleys." According to the testimony of the thirty-sixth of Exodus, the merely mechanical and artistic skill of Bezaleel and Aholiab were inwrought with the same divine spirit as were the ministration of the priest that afterwards officiated in the tabernacle which those two holy architects contributed to construct. They were prepared to serve the Lord, and their natural equipment pointed out to them the path along which their service should be rendered, and their office became a holy office, because, although material in its form, it was devoutly ministerial in its spirit and purpose.

Aptitude considered as means by which God makes known his will respecting us need not exclude other means of a more apparently supernatural character; but to one who thoroughly acknowleges the doctrine of the divine immanence the difference between natural and supernatural is a difference only in point of view. The twofold term is rather in the interest of mental convenience than of exact truth. Nature becomes identified with super-nature and vice versa to the mind that is comprehensive enough to view realities disrobed of their appearances.

So that whether God communicates to me his thought concerning me, and his purpose respecting me, through the counsel of a friend, through the shaping of circumstances, or by a dream, a vision, a burning bush, a great light, or less startlingly, but more in consonance with the usual method of divine procedure, by the drawing of my own temperament and the peculiar fitness natively inherent in me, my calling in the latter case, equally as in the former ones, is a calling from the Lord.

So considered, aptitude becomes a matter of even solemn seriousness. Solemn because it is a kind of original divine ordination; solemn because absence of aptitude is a disqualification that is so numerously unheeded. The church is made poorer by every man who stands in the pulpit without having been born

into relations with the pulpit,—ministers that are such by accident; that are such at the impulse of an undisciplined hyper-conscientiousness; that become such by the pleading constraint of a devout mother; that are such out of the idle disposition to follow the line of least resistance and enter the ministry because that is a door that opens to them more easily than any other and with less promise of unsuccess.

The only other ministerial qualification that I mention today connects itself with the matter of experience. The only truths that we can preach with effect are the truths that we know, and the only truths that we know are the truths that we know experimentally, truths that have been run in the grooves of our own thinking, saturated with the juices of our personal feeling and interpreted to us by the discipline of our individual living.

Neither ethics nor theology are matters that can be committed to memory. St. Paul's Letter to the Church in Galatia testifies that the Christ whom he preached was not a Christ that had become his by any process of outside indoctrination, a Christ whose lineaments of character had been stamped upon his intelligence by classroom delineation, but a Christ become his by a process of inward revelation; original, therefore, not a transcript; an experience, not a quotation. Knowledge that is made ours experi-

mentally becomes an immovable factor in our life, something which we do not have to buttress in order to the comfort of our own thought, and something that we do not feel it necessary to sustain by logical undergirding in commending it to the acceptance of others. Christ never argued.

There are two classes of convictions, classes that are to be more sharply discriminated than usually occurs. One class is of the convictions that we hold; the other is of the convictions that hold us. Those comprised in the first class are matter simply of intellectual baggage—baggage, not vehicle; we carry them, not they us. Like common impedimenta, we label it that we may be sure that it is ours. We check it that we may be able to claim it at the end of the route. Like other baggage, we lose it sometimes, and cling to it that it may not become lost.

It is not an uncommon thing to hear people say that they are clinging to their old religious convictions. It is hard work and very pathetic work. One of Yale's distinguished graduates, afterwards the pastor of a church in Hartford, tells the story of the way in which, here in New Haven, his religious convictions slipped away from him, all but one, in spite of the tenacity with which he clung to them. It is a sad bit of autobiography. It occurs in an article of his entitled the "Resolving of Doubts." The story

is a sad one, but most illuminating and cheering in its issue, for the subtraction of a negative quantity is substantial addition.

But the class of assurance that really concerns us, and the only one that is practical in its effect, is not an act of clinging but a state of being clung to. So understood the conviction that we have of any reality is the grasp that that reality has on us, not the grasp that we have on it; and if it is a tremendous reality it makes us titanic,—holds us fast and moves us about with all its muscular intensity, so that its colossal energy becomes our energy and we are converted into a kind of right arm, through which that reality does its work and deals its blows.

I have seen big boulders, come down from the mountain, held in the jaws of a sliding glacier, and as the glacier crept with an impalpable but colossal tread, I have seen the boulder—a vast but inert block of granite—go scouring along the rock-bank that the glacier grazed against, and seen it score itself on that rock-bank in lines indelible for a thousand or two thousand years. That is the picture I have before my eyes when I talk or think about conviction. There is nothing lethargic in the matter we are on. We are in the region of dynamics, personal, spiritual dynamics.

The power was not in the boulder. It might have

weighed a thousand tons, and, so long as there was nothing but boulder, might have tarried up in the sun-stricken and storm-blasted world of the upper Alps till by slow process of disintegration it had become dissolved into dust and been meaninglessly and productivelessly transported by wind and rain, waterfall and brook, to the lower valleys. It was the enginery of the ice holding the boulder in its jaws that did the work and that inscribed those geologic memoranda that some human eye may be reading ages upon ages after your reading and mine has all been done.

And, moreover, it was not the immensity of the boulder to which was due the imperishable groove that was plowed into rock; it might have been merely a pebble, but even so, once frozen into the crystalline massiveness of the moving ice-river, even then it would put its indestructible chirography upon tablets of stone as easily as the pen held between the thumb and finger traces our autograph on blank paper.

Once in the region of genuine conviction,—conviction interpreted on its dynamic side,—we are at the heart of a sphere of spiritual energies, energies which do the world's work, energies that work revolutions, and that perpetually lift the times out of old slavery into larger liberty. For what the boulder or the pebble is in the maw of the ice-river, that a man is

when held fast in the relentless embrace of something that is everlastingly real, something that carries the weight, the push, the tension of the eternal and the flavor of all the ages.

We must remember that all the way from the sun down to the raindrop nothing goes unless it is carried. And the same is true of personality, even though of a gigantic order. Things go when they are picked up and carried and they go tremendously only when they are fastened upon by the impact of the great energies and the tremendous velocities. It is getting on to the windward side of a great truth and letting it blow upon us; on to the windward side of a great man and letting him breathe upon us; on to the windward side of the great Christ and letting the celestial afflatus carry us upon its own silent but stately current, that converts us from a mere splendid possibility into a half-divine reality, making men heroes and able to do the work of heroes, making them prophets and able to speak the word of prophets.

It is no less an idea than that, then, that we want to understand by experience, a conviction of reality that is nothing other than a realization of reality; truth, objectively considered, becomes a subjective possession. Years ago, here in New England we used, more frequently than now, to hear men speak

of experiencing religion. Experienced religion is the only religion there is, and certainly it is the only religion that makes out the proper content of preaching.

We have to preach the truth as we know it. If our deliverances are genuine they will therefore carry not only the complexion but the flavor of our individual personality. We are not phonographs nor dictagraphs, to give forth in stupid mechanical repetition what has been told into us. Christ says of himself not simply that he told the truth, but that he was the truth. Personality is what counts, and truth is made available by becoming indistinguishably absorbed in personality. Incarnation lies at the basis of influence, is the secret of influence. Truth is not live truth, and able therefore to do live work, till it is taken up into personality. The parts of the Bible that are the effective parts are consequently the portions that are biographical.

The men and women of the Bible are so many separate and original truths going about in clothing of flesh and blood and set talking to us and personally setting forth truths before our eyes and ears in a dramatic way. Truth by that means acquires breath and pulse, intellect and heart, and therefore reënforces our respiration, stimulates thought and

quickens heart-throbs. The impersonal does not count.

In that sense of the term, when we preach we have to preach ourselves or it is not preaching but lecturing, and lecturing to a congregation never changes the congregation. It may illuminate it, but illumination is like winter sunshine, which brightens things but cannot make them grow.

In keeping with that it occurs to me to define inspiration as the overflowing of a soul that God has filled. To insist upon the doctrine of verbal inspiration, or upon any doctrine that approaches thereto, seems to me to be quiddling with a reality that is too immense to deserve handling in any so paltry a way. The man who said that phonographs would eventually be set up in our pulpits in place of preachers had probably sat under the ministration of preachers who were phonographs. Preaching is not the retailing of other men's visions. Inspiration is always original. We are like St. Paul in this respect, that we can truly preach only that which has been made to be individually our own by commerce with the Divine Spirit, with this understanding, however, that what has been divinely made over to us has to submit itself to human limitations and to go forth with the form that has been impressed upon it by the mould of our individual eccentricities of thought and sentiment.

II

PULPIT AIMS

Lecturing is not preaching. The functions pertaining to the platform and the pulpit are distinct; or if to some degree they seem to coalesce, their purposes are distinct. If they do not always appear so it is because the platform is sometimes removed from the public hall and set up in a sanctuary in place of the pulpit which has been taken down and moved out.

Socrates was not satisfied to be a lecturer; he wanted to be more than a lecturer and to be a preacher. If he had been contented to be a lecturer he would have been allowed to live. But as he insisted on preaching, the Athenians fell back from him and gave him hemlock tea.

Aristotle was not satisfied to be a lecturer. He, too, wanted to be more than a lecturer and to preach. If he had been contented to lecture he might have remained at Athens, but as he insisted on preaching, although he was not executed as Socrates was, he found it convenient to remove from Athens.

Formerly, then, preaching was a dangerous profession. It was sometimes so in old Hebrew times.

John the Baptist maintained himself in his pulpit for a time with unabated popularity, but in one lucky, or unlucky, moment, he delivered a short discourse that was rather more evidently and pointedly applicable than usual and he lost not only his pulpit but his head. That might have occurred before if the parish to which he preached had had the same power over life and death that was possessed by the king who executed him.

Jesus Christ never lectured. What he said, so far as it has been preserved to us, was distinctly sermon. His pastorate lasted about three years. He was crucified for being a homiletical irritation, nuisance, if you please. There are ministers in New York who have stood in the pulpit ten times as many years as Christ preached in Judea, Samaria and Galilee, and yet apparently without a desire that they should be crucified, except perhaps on the part of a very limited number.

Not long after, Stephen, the proto-martyr, was stoned. His pastorate was only a brief one. So far as we are informed, he preached but once; but it was preaching. The earlier part of the discourse was rather after the lecture order—historical, and the Jews were always fond of history, that is to say the records of their own people. The lecture portion had continued for quite a long time before the hearers

began to sense its drift. Fifty verses out of the fifty-six were spent in lifting the hammer before bringing it down on to the nail, but when it reached the nail there was howling and teeth-gnashing, and the only reply they could make was to throw stones at him, till, as the records say, "he fell asleep."

It is an interesting incident of that same scene that Saul was there, who afterwards became Paul. He heard the sermon; probably he saw the hammer, the nail, the stones and the death. Without that sermon there might have been no Paul. Preaching that has hammer and nails in it and that hurts was, at that time, the kind of discourse that preachers preached. A man who is in a dead sleep cannot be awakened by sprinkling him with lavender water.

Then as to the Twelve Apostles, tradition has it that all of them but one died a violent death. That was because they did not attempt to discharge their apostolic functions by lecturing, but by preaching. They went about it affectionately, as did Stephen. No man ever preached with a tenderer, sweeter spirit than did Stephen. His last words were, "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge," gentle and forgiving even in death agony. And yet he worked with hammer and nail.

But to go back a little, and indicate by reference to Socrates, Aristotle and others what it is that

distinguishes preaching from lecturing and that makes preaching to be preaching.

John Stuart Blackie, of the University of Edinburgh, was setting forth the character of Socrates as a preacher and at the same time indicating the difference between that and lecturing when he said:

> If the speaker has a real vocation to address his fellowmen on moral subjects, and if he does not dwell in vague and trivial generalities, sounding very pious on Sunday, but having no distinct and recognizable reference to the secular business of Monday, then a good sermon may be compared to a discharge of moral electricity which will arouse many sleepers, or to the setting up a sure fingerpost which will direct many wanderers.

Therein lay the difference between Socrates and the sophists. The sophists talked for the sake of talking; argued for the sake of arguing; and when they were through arguing and talking, things were just where they were before, their audience unchanged, and they themselves in no slightest danger of crucifixion, for nothing had occurred either to stimulate particularly the intelligence of their hearers or, which is more important, to touch or irritate their consciences.

The author from whom I have just quoted handles Aristotle in the same way, and in the biographical

sketch which he has prepared of him includes the following paragraph:

> Once and again in the first two books of his treatise does he repeat the solemn warning that our object in inquiring into the nature of virtue is not that we may know what virtue is, but that we may be virtuous. Once and again does he enter a protest against the tendencies of his countrymen, always ready to stand and debate even when the solution of the problem was to be found only in motion and action. Subtleties of any kind indeed are not suitable for a moral discourse. Ethical philosophy refers as distinctly to a deed as a sword refers to a cut; and all questions of morals are idle and pernicious that do not bear directly on some practical result.

We have already spoken of the tone of John the Baptist's address to the throngs that gathered to his preaching in the wilderness. He leveled his instructions to what he knew to be their need. He made no apologies for the directness of his discourse. There was no attempt to win them to himself, but only to point out to them the path of personal and individual duty and to insist on their walking in it. His preaching was motived by no disposition to make truth acceptable to his hearers or duty easy for them. Instead of abating the strenuousness of obligation and letting it down to the lower level of the life they

were leading, he aimed only to elevate them to the higher level of the life they were not leading.

He worked for results. There was no dramatic representation of what men in general ought to be, but an undecorated exhibit of what the men in front of him ought to be. We can depend upon it that when his hearers went back to their respective businesses, they did not go congratulating themselves on the attractive presentation of truth to which it had been their great pleasure to listen.

Very likely it had not been to them altogether a pleasure, for what he had dwelt upon had not been of a kind to appeal to their dramatic instincts or to induce in them complacency and self-felicitation. In other words, John the Baptist was a preacher, and, as already intimated, when some time later he pushed his moral poignard down a little deeper into the place where the nerves lie so thick and so sensitive, the victim of his discourse struck back and he had to bleed for it. The blood he shed was proof presumptive that he preached, not lectured.

All of that which we have been remarking of John the Baptist is equally true, more than equally true, of the discourses of our Lord. We have an idea that there was a certain gentleness about the way in which Christ dealt with his audience that can not be predicated of the Baptist. But even so, the larger part of

what is preserved to us is very much in the nature of a surgical operation. His surgery was ordinarily—not always—exceedingly courteous and considerate, but it was surgery. He stripped off the cuticle and operated among the nerves,—and that hurts.

When he said unto them, "Woe unto you, scribes, pharisees, hypocrites," the operation was not only a surgical one, but one that was untempered by tenderness of method. It is not easy to understand exactly what is meant by people who expatiate serenely and comfortably upon the winsomeness of the lessons that are taught in the gospels and the appeals that are distributed through them.

Take, as an example, the Sermon on the Mount, with its ominous conclusion. The Decalogue is not an approximation to it in the severity of its demands.

The latter puts before men an ideal of what they should do; the former an ideal of what they should be. Anybody can do right if he tries hard, but he has to try a great deal harder in order to be right. We do not have to exert ourselves in order to abstain from killing our neighbor, but how about loving that neighbor,—not simply loving James, whom it may be easy to be fond of, but loving William, despicable, ugly, dirty William?

There is, to be sure, a great deal of love wrought into the texture of the gospel, and so the slopes of the

high hills are covered with flowers of ineffable beauty, and one can pick flowers and scent their fragrance without taking account of the blunt rock that lies to immeasurable depths underneath.

Misapprehension of the real situation grows out of this fact that Christ's law of life has been interpreted in a way to exempt from the duty of obeying Christ's law. Those fiery bodies that we call the fixed stars are beautiful when seen at this distance, but the heat that is in them would make it uncomfortable to live there. So Christ, viewed at the distance of twenty centuries, is attractive. We are impressed by his gentleness, his loving kindness, sympathy and patient service rendered to all kinds of need and destitution. But were he to come among us he would be just as unpopular as he was twenty centuries ago.

An ideal expressed in words is very winsome, but an ideal dressed in flesh and standing at our elbow, with its very sublimity uttering itself in silent denunciation of our own moral turpitude and spiritual paltriness, would be just what the Bible calls it, "a consuming fire." It would be like living in the hot star Sirius, so resplendent in its distant complexion but so torrid when approached near enough to become a neighbor. We should become like Peter who "fell down at Jesus' feet saying, Depart from me for I am a sinful man."

That was the secret of Christ's loneliness when upon earth. He wanted people, but they did not want him. When it came evening, as we are once told, all the people scattered to their homes. He had no home, and no one cared to entertain him for the night, and so he went forth and passed the night among the hills and under the stars. He would be treated here just as he was in Jerusalem and be called an impossible. Things have not changed in the course of two thousand years, the great things, I mean, the large relations.

Perfect holiness is the same as it was in Jerusalem and sin is the same. And the two are as far apart. And sin hates holiness as it did at the moment when the nails were being driven into Christ's body preparatory to crucifixion. I have read that long before Christ came it was declared by a certain Greek that if perfect holiness should appear on earth it would be crucified. Perhaps that is only a story. It may not be true. It might be. They will not come to the light, said Jesus, because their deeds are evil. It is not so much hearing about goodness, having it described, etc., that is disquieting. On the contrary, it is rather soothing, caressing. It is only when it comes so close as to be exacting, menacing, that it begins to ruffle us.

It is pleasant to sit before an open wood fire and

see the play of the flames and think long thoughts and see visions in the tongues of fire, but if the heat begins to become more than just so intense we say that it is getting too warm and we move back. Flame is pretty, wondrously fascinating, till it approaches contact with us, then it is horrible.

It is strange that a thing can be at once so charming and so repulsive; that Sirius can be so beautiful to look upon at a distance and so excruciating to live in. It is the weakness of the existing pulpit that its portrayal of holiness and sin impresses people neither with the beauty of the one nor with the hatefulness of the other and therefore with the contrast between them.

That is why we preachers get along so harmoniously with our people. It was a remark made by a former pastor of a very prominent church in New York City that if he preached the whole truth and brought that truth close to the consciences of his congregation, he would not be allowed to remain long in his pulpit. That might seem an exaggerated statement. You can have your own opinion of it. He has since left that pulpit and is pursuing a course of instruction less distinctly religious.

Sin is not a frequent topic of pulpit discourse. Much less so than formerly. More is done to bring Christ down to the level of men than to bring men

up to the level of Christ. The preference of people is to be let alone. No one objects to having truth dramatized, but to have truth preached is different; that is, if it is preached in the spirit of the text, "If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them."

There is willingness enough on the part of people to have truth represented in a way to stimulate the intellect and to warm the heart, but not to prick into the conscience. We like as much goodness as we have, but do not care for any more. We are glad we are not as bad as some, but are not ambitious to be better than we are. We are more disposed to accept Christ as one who will save us *in* our sins than as one who will save us *from* our sins. Which means, if frankly expressed, that Christ is mostly a superfluity; that it is not literally true that we need any saving, that what Christianity substantially amounts to is that it is a divine arrangement by which, out of the abundance of God's love and consideration for human fallibility and depravity, and the difficulty involved in getting rid of depravity, we can be reckoned as good when we are not.

And because sin is dealt with, by the modern pulpit, with a delicate reserve not predicable of the great preachers of the Old Covenant nor of the great Apostles of the New, there has come to be a corresponding decline in the emphasis laid by the pew upon

the personality of Christ and his redemptive function. It goes without the saying that a sense of sin and a sense of moral helplessness go together. The intensity of the one comes and goes with the intensity of the other. Only the invalid who realizes the seriousness of his invalidism is moved to seek the ministrations of a physician.

The preacher cannot exaggerate the grandeur of human nature as that nature lay prefigured in the mind and purpose of the Creator, but that grandeur in no wise diminishes or neutralizes the significance of those antagonistic energies of the flesh which, strangely enough, are so easily able to hold man's native magnificence in subjection, and make the soul a plaything and a slave of the body. And till there has been begotten in the pew, under the direct handling of the situation by the pulpit, a realization of that enslavement, there will be developed no compelling consciousness of the need of an Emancipator.

The majority of our clergymen, as well as of our laymen, are probably believers in the general theory of evolution; but simple observation would seem to be sufficient to constrain us all to hold the doctrine in such way as not to fall into error of supposing that what is bad can by process of unfolding develop into what is good.

Things develop undoubtedly; that is the universal

tendency; it is part of the scheme of nature and of supernature; but they can develop downward as well as upward. Things can go on growing or they can go on rotting. It is just as much in the nature of a young apple, that, under certain conditions, it should become more and more decayed, as it is that under other certain conditions it should become more and more rosy and luscious. St. James unconsciously confessed himself an evolutionist when he wrote, "When evil desire hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin; and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death."

It is not the purpose of these paragraphs to discuss the doctrine of evolution, but only to assert the principle that only that which is good can grow into what is better, while that which is bad tends, at the pressure of an inherent force, toward what is worse, so that only by the interference of a power above nature can nature's tendencies be withstood and overcome. And out of that fact springs naturally the suggestion that a twentieth century preacher can only equal himself to the demands of existing conditions by making himself familiar with the thoughts that people, especially young people, are thinking upon such matters. This is a point that will offer itself for later consideration, if time shall permit.

It will be, furthermore, a part of the preacher's practical handling of his congregation to rub into

the consciousness of its members the fact that engaging their intellectual attention and enlightening them is of only subordinate value, and at most only a means to a remoter end. To say of one that he is an interesting preacher, or even that he is an instructive preacher, may mean much, and may mean nothing at all. "He came that they might have life," says the Gospel of John, and light is not life, not necessarily. Mere illumination will not make a plant grow, nor restrain the leaves on the trees from decaying and falling to earth.

A highly educated congregation is not to be dealt with in a manner different from that to be pursued in addressing an uneducated one, except so far as the mode of address is concerned, but not so far as relates to its matter and the object had in view.

One great difficulty involved in addressing cultivated listeners lies in the fact that if the discourse be what is called an ably constructed one, the enjoyment that they take, in feeling their own mental machinery moving responsively, they will suppose to be religious enjoyment. Experiencing the revolution of the wheels of our mentality is a pleasurable one always. And very often that is all that a person means when he says of his minister that he likes his preaching. If he understood himself better he would say that he is fascinated by his own cerebral activity.

Or he may say that he likes his preacher because of the way that he put things; he is entertained by the preacher's intellectual agility.

The same thing is true in the sanctuary as is true of the majority of attendants at a concert hall, who come away from the rendering of a celebrated violinist charmed, they say, with the music which he discourses, while the real fact in the case is that they are captivated by his digital dexterity, and were anxious to sit where they could see him, since it is with their eyes that they listened rather than with their ears. So in listening to a pianist, so in listening to a vocalist, who is certain to stir the house to tumultuous applause if she is able to bring her flight to a finish by lighting at sky-C.

By making the pulpit the medium for dealing directly with people with a view to promoting their more and more complete emancipation from sin and sin's power, and by giving it to be definitely understood that that is the pulpit's prime mission, the pulpit has secured to it a character that differentiates it from every other appliance worked in the interests of human uplift, and so creates for itself a clear place among the instrumentalities of progress.

In this way it flatly meets the question, quite often proposed, and in many instances honestly proposed, What occasion is there for the maintenance of such

an institution in addition to all the other influences that are being operated in man's behest, and operated with such an outlay of money, time and talent? It is a proper question to ask and one to which the pulpit, by the way in which it uses itself, and by the programme whose pursuance it publicly announces for itself and binds upon itself, should make a frank and sufficient reply. And that reply it furnishes by holding itself consistently and pronouncedly to the work of emancipating men individually and collectively from the power of sin. In that field the pulpit, using the term in its comprehensive sense, stands practically alone.

It is not a field that can be fairly said to be occupied by the press, certainly not the secular press. Its point of view if not irreligious,—as a good deal of it is,—is at any rate unreligious. If it chronicles events occurring in the religious world, it does it in a colorless way carefully inexpressive of any moral sympathy with that which the event may be supposed to import.

There is no objection to be urged against this. It is proper and to the public advantage that each aspect of our many-sided life should have its journalistic organs.

Each class of matters is best treated by experts. St. Paul could not have made a success of the New

York *World*, any more than Mr. Pulitzer could have creditably edited the Epistles to the Romans. This is no reflection upon either the deceased editor or the Apostle.

This is not saying that our secular papers do not contain a vast amount of edifying material. Society would be poorer without them. They promote intelligence by furnishing material for thought; they bring unrelated individuals into a kind of mutual touch, help to promote a sense of the solidarity of the race, and make each several man a sharer in the life and experience of the race.

And still farther it is to be gratefully allowed that all of our best newspapers are fosterers of morality. But morality is not religion and does not carry in it even the flavor of religion's essence,—a matter, however, which must be reserved to another address as being too large to be considered in this particular connection.

As for our religious journals, not as much is to be said for most of them as it would be pleasant to say. Speaking broadly, they do not make large contributions toward the evangelizing of the world. It is a well-known fact, frequently illustrated, that they are individually so moribund that two or more have to pool their issues in order to make one live thing.

Another expedient is to court popularity by reducing to magazine form and padding with secularity.

This is said in all respect to such few papers as continue to be in fact what they are in their claims, and serve as a kind of legible pulpit, presenting Christianity in its essence and with a combination of intelligence and piety that commands respect. There are three elements essential to the success of religious journalism,—three that are rarely found in combination,—an unlimited amount of capital, an inexhaustible supply of brain and a rich infusion of the evangelical spirit.

The more amply, therefore, the pulpit fulfils its distinctive function as an implement of God for delivering the soul from the thraldom of sin, the more inadequate becomes the claim put forth by Sunday journalism that it brings to the reader thoughts that are as elevated in their tone, as nutritive to the intellect, as what the pulpit brings to the listener, and phrased perhaps in terms more finished and cultivated in their diction than any of which the average preacher may be capable.

No one will deny the literary, intellectual and possibly also the ethical claims of our best secular journals, especially in their Sunday issues, which, saving the coarse and flashy cartoons with which most of them are disfigured, are the choicest of the week.

But even so, they are not constructed, and are not intended to be constructive, in a way to accomplish what is properly the prime purpose of Christian preaching, viz., to hold the soul consciously in the presence of its God and thus to deliver it out of the power of the devil into a growing experience of divine sonship. Second only to the lusts of the flesh, Sunday journalism and the automobile are the worst enemies of sanctuary worship.

Nor any more than the press does the stage cover the territory specifically accorded to the pulpit. In an interview which it was my pleasure to have with Madame Bernhardt a year or two ago, one question which I asked her she failed to answer. She had told me that any inquiry I put to her she would reply to, but in one instance she was evasive, and very much to my regret, for I felt that her answer to that particular question would reveal a good deal to me as to the moral and religious attitude of the great actress. The inquiry to which I failed to receive a reply was this: "Do you give your preference to the pulpit or the stage considered as means of human uplift?"

She is too bright and too experienced a person not to have a rather definite opinion upon a question of that kind, lying so close as it does to the line of her own interest and pursuit. I have always wondered why it was that, communicative as she proved to be

upon all other matters to which her attention was called, she was so reticent upon this.

Even among distinctively church circles there has been during the last fifty years a decided change of opinion, or at least of usage, as toward the theater. Whether the truth of the case is to be stated by saying that change of sentiment induced change of usage, or change of usage induced change of sentiment, is a question about which opinions might differ. We know that in such matters people sometimes alter their customs and habits first, and then adjust their opinions to match. It is rather commonly the case that we shape our doctrines to fit our behavior rather than our behavior to fit our doctrines, and, having learned to allow ourselves modes of living and doing that conscience would at one time have forbidden, turn around and fix over our doctrine in a way to satisfy the necessities of our altered and perhaps deteriorated behavior; for we do like to keep our conduct and our creed somewhere in sight of each other, whether by prodding the one or curbing the other. This is not, however, to be taken as a critique upon the theater, for that which the theater has to offer—assuming of course that it is untainted—undoubtedly meets a legitimate demand, in that it ministers refreshment that is rational without being

mentally wearying and that is diverting without being sensuously debasing.

All of this, however, is simply preliminary to my confident contention that except in the very rarest instances are people made either finer in their piety or even purer in their morals by what is offered them by the stage. A man is not religiously nor morally bettered by any influence that does not tend to some sort of moral or religious action, and that is a result which, judging from observation and from experience, is not predicable of dramatic exhibition. The whole movement upon the boards is maintained in an unsubstantial atmosphere of make-believe. A successful actress, who consulted me in regard to certain matters that touched closer to the line of actual living than those that were traversed by her own dramatic experience, once said to me, "That which you say is probably true but I have lived so long and so constantly in the realm of the unreal that I am not able to discriminate between what is true and what is false."

A whole audience may be brought to sob with tender emotion without a single member having his heart permanently softened into a condition of finer altruism. Tears wrung from the eyes by fictitious sin or fictitious sorrow neither spring from the heart nor soak back into the heart in gracious irrigation.

The preacher of today has to address himself to people who are in almost every respect in a condition of unsettlement and revolt, and to the extent that he realizes that fact it will be one of his aims to secure in them quietness and establishment of mind. When we speak into a storm our voice will not carry. The pulpit today faces an attitude of denial. The age is a thoughtful one and if feeling produces among people relations of convergence, thinking produces correspondingly a state of divergence. People feel together, but think apart. The situation, so far forth, is a wholesome one, but it is a difficult one to face. It is better to be a sincere heretic than to go stumbling along under the burden of a barren tradition. It is better to think wrong than not to think at all.

At the same time, while there is a stimulus in speaking to a congregation made up of men and women who think that there is not in addressing a crowd of intellectual dummies, or an assembly of such people as the preachers of fifty or a hundred years ago had to address, who in all matters of Christian doctrine expected the parson to do their thinking for them, and during his ministrations patiently slept out of confidence in his doctrinal infallibility, yet the altered situation subjects the preacher of the present to a strain that while stimulating is also perplexing.

In another lecture I shall speak of prophetic authority considered as a qualified preacher's prerogative; but whatever of truth there will be in the point for which I shall then contend, it still remains a fact that in these days the people in the pews are slow to believe a thing is true simply on the strength of the preacher's *ipse dixit*. It will not be true to them because he says it is true. So far forth, he is the prisoner in the dock and they are the jury, and after the service is over and the benediction pronounced they will gather about their respective dinner tables and bring in their verdict.

As things are, very little will be accomplished by any direct attempt to refute existing errors of opinion, certainly not if they are errors that are sincerely entertained, as very likely they are. There is, however, an underlying basis of orthodoxy in every man's soul. It is at that point that the preacher has to put in his work. The foundations of our nature are not laid in the false but in the true. The constitutional veracity latent in the human is our one available point of access.

To whatever extent error may have developed, fundamentally we are not fools. However far inward depravity may have pursued its corrosive course, we are not totally corrupted. Unless a man has ceased to be human there still survives in him a spot, a

residuum, of original soundness. And it is that spot really that does the only effective homiletical work. Every man has to be his own preacher. The testimony of his own soul is about the only testimony that he puts unreserved confidence in.

A man cannot be argued, nor argue himself, out of what he himself personally testifies to. What I know, I know, even if it is something that I do not like to know. It was when the prodigal came to *himself* that were constructed in him the beginnings of a new life. It was when Nathan had succeeded in penetrating to the original David and in making David reason with himself, that he gained the object, and gathered the fruits of his discourse.

Sin can be resolved into environment and heredity till the sinner has been forced to forget his surroundings and his ancestry and to look straight into his own eye, and his consciousness has become definitely and exclusively self-consciousness. And, in general, the preacher will have accomplished the legitimate purpose of his sermon if he shall have succeeded in sending his hearers out of the church less mindful of the thoughts and phrases that have come to them from the pulpit, than they are of the discourse that is being delivered to them from the closer and more persuasive oracles of their own hearts.

III

THE PULPIT'S ESTIMATE OF THE PEW

Psychology is as essential as theology to the proper presentation of pulpit truth. The candidate for orders is always assumed to have a knowledge of God. It is sometimes an assumption contrary to fact, but so much is supposed,—supposed by the congregation to which he ministers, previously supposed by the council or presbytery by which he has been commended to the congregation. It is assumed that he has made himself rationally acquainted with the Divine Idea, and empirically acquainted with the Divine Being, so that he is in condition to say out of a full and honest heart, "I know whom I have believed."

The ground which this opening paragraph has suggested is so familiar as scarcely needing to be traversed in this presence, and serves me simply as a point of departure from which to go on and say that the reverent intimacy with *God*, required of a preacher, in order that he may have in thought and sentiment the matter that it is his office to present, needs to be matched by a complementary, familiar intimacy with *man*, in order that the message which

he brings may be effectively fitted to the nature and condition of those whom he brings it to.

It is scripturally related of Christ that one of his ministerial qualifications lay in the fact that he knew what was in man. This complements that other knowledge which he had of what was in God. The preacher is in that respect something like the skilled sharpshooter, who, while understanding how to handle his piece, insists upon having definitely in view the object to which—not toward which, but to which—it is to be discharged.

One effect of this will be that the preacher will be disposed, frequently at least, to particularize his message. What I want to say is that every congregation is made up of a number of contributory congregations. There is a sub-congregation of the old and another of the young; one of the rich and another of the poor; one of the learned and another of the untaught; one of the converted and another of the unregenerate.

Each sub-congregation requires its specific treatment. Preaching that is excessively homogeneous in its quality and style is likely to prevent heterogeneity in the make-up of the congregation, and therefore to work its impairment in strength and efficiency.

We know that Christ shaped his treatment to match the character and condition of those with whom

he was dealing. Certain matters he presented to the multitude, other certain matters to his disciples. Even as regards his disciples he made a difference. There was among them an outer and also an inner circle, receiving, respectively, exoteric and esoteric treatment.

That principle will not absolutely exclude preaching that has in it an element of universality, the presentation of truths that are universally applicable,—what, in all respect, we might designate as blunderbuss preaching, calculated for general effects. Still I think that, as a rule, presentations of truth that are shaped with a reference that is specific, carries with it, on the part of speaker and hearer both, a livelier sense of personal touch, for the hearer will best feel the truth when he feels the preacher and when he realizes that he is himself the one that is being particularly approached and addressed.

The preacher feels that he has accomplished something when on Monday he is told by a parishioner, "I felt as though you were talking to me yesterday." To that extent there is an advantage in small congregations. The personal element is economized. A hearer occupying a front pew, who had been accustomed to appropriate to the occupants of the pews behind whatever practical lessons were delivered from the pulpit, never made personal application of them

to himself till, on an inclement Sabbath, he discovered that he and the sexton constituted the entire congregation.

The effective pleader at the bar applies this principle with a seriousness and confidence not always predicable of the preacher, and makes it part of his practice to deal not altogether with the jury as a whole, but, in important cases, specifically with each individual juryman.

An example of this is recorded in the biography of Rufus Choate. I do not recall the offense charged against the defendant, in whose behalf the distinguished attorney was pleading; but at any rate the suit was one in which Mr. Choate was deeply interested and which he was especially concerned to win. In the course of his plea a card was handed to him on which was written, "Will Mr. Choate kindly suspend his plea for a moment and have a word in the ante-room with the person whose name is on this card?" Mr. Choate considered the request for a moment, then turned the card over and wrote, "Yes, presently; I have already got all the jury with the exception of the red-headed fellow on the back seat. I shall have him in a few minutes and then I will come out."

That principle sagaciously applied was part secret of Mr. Choate's phenomenal success with a

jury. Other things being equal, what each hearer will appropriate to himself will, in quantity, vary inversely with the number of hearers. Under such circumstance the arithmetic law still holds, that the smaller the divisor the larger the quotient.

Christ accordingly avoided large congregations, not courted them. Some of his most memorable words were spoken to a single hearer. He spent most of his time with an audience so small that some of us would not think it worth our while to minister to it. Anxiety to stand before a thousand or two people is quite as likely to proceed from the preacher's ambition to exploit himself as from any holy passion to give widest possible currency to God's truth, and to submit the greatest number of souls to its gracious governance.

While discussing this matter of the human element, and of preaching that is direct and particularized, and in which the speaker has a vivid sense of the individual hearers whom he is addressing, it will be quite apropos to interpolate a paragraph or two touching the comparative merits of written and unwritten discourse.

There is no absolutely best method of preaching. The question is like that of the best form of government. The best form of government is that which is most consonant with the qualifications of the gover-

nor, and the condition of the governed. In like manner the best method of preaching is that which is most in keeping with the aptitudes of the pulpit and the condition of the pew.

If the preacher's use of a manuscript is such as to deaden his consciousness of those whom he is supposed to be addressing, such, that is to say, that either he or his hearers feel that the manuscript forms a barrier between the pulpit and the pew, then certainly the manuscript ought to be dispensed with. Preaching proper, like any other kind of teaching, involves an interchange of personalities, and anything that embarrasses the exchange and interrupts the circuit is fatal.

But in cases where there is no such sacrifice of results there is a good deal that can be said for sermons delivered from manuscript. Yet it has to be conceded that my own habits of discourse have created in me a prejudice that decidedly impairs the value of my own judgment upon the matter, for I have rarely preached what is called "extemporaneously" without its resulting in a strong inclination to retire from the ministry.

Not to go into the matter lengthily, therefore, written preparation helps to secure the preacher against monotonousness of idea and monotonousness of expression. It encourages in him compactness of

style. It affords him greater opportunity to put things in that acuminated manner that will help to make them stick in the memory of the hearer. It helps to say more in the same length of time.

I once heard it remarked of the late Dr. Storrs, that it took him forty-five minutes to say as much extemporaneously as he had been previously able to say in thirty, when he preached from notes; and when Howard Crosby was asked how long a sermon should be, he said, "Thirty minutes, with a leaning to mercy." It will, moreover, be one of the by-products of the written method that it will secure a certain conciseness of phrase, a certain unforgetableness in some of its utterances, which will be recognized, if repeated before the same congregation, and tend, therefore, to discourage the idle habit of preaching old sermons.

In learning to know what man is, our first attention will require to be given, not to men individual or otherwise, as we see them about us, but to man as he exists in God's thought, to man as he was divinely anticipated and contemplated when were spoken those original words, "Let us make man in our image."

Even when we study humanness as imperfectly illustrated in ourselves and our contemporaries, the thing of largest interest and import is still not the

defective shapes in which it today evinces itself, but in the traces which it affords of undecayed, primeval originality, even as students of art seriously contemplate the splendid ruins of Greek, Roman and Oriental architecture, not out of interest in the decay, into which that architecture has largely fallen, but out of loving admiration and veneration for the unconsumed splendor which that decay imperfectly disguises.

History affords us rare instances of more or less close approximation to man in his ideal perfectness, but only in the person of Christ does God's thought of man come to its complete utterance. Christ is man as God saw him, felt him, loved him, before there was a man, even as he saw, admired and cherished the tabernacle in the wilderness, before the divine tabernacle-concept had come to its architectural embodiment at the hands of Moses. Everything *was*, before it *existed*.

We are not going to be tempted, at this point, into any feats of theological analysis. Analysis is fatal. We are not here to deny anything but only to affirm. To attempt the explanation of what is essentially a mystery robs it of the power that belongs to it *as* mystery, without making any addition to the sum of our available convictions. It is enough to say that Christ's relation to God was such that he could

authoritatively reveal the divine, and his relation to man such that he could authoritatively reveal the human.

More use has been made of him in the former relation than in the latter, although it is certainly as important that we should have an understanding of humanness as of divineness, and as yet we are as far from comprehending the mystery of the former as we are from comprehending the mystery of the latter.

That is not a thing to surprise us if we accept in its literalness the language descriptive of man employed by the Psalmist, as given in the revised reading: "What is man that thou art mindful of him and the son of man that thou visitest him? For thou hast made him a little lower than God, and hast crowned him with glory and honor."

It was the purpose of the theology under whose pulpit influence some of the older ones of us were brought up, to lay the emphasis not on the natural dignity of human nature, but on its acquired corruption, and having driven in the nail to head it down by the rendering of such hymns as, "O what a worthless worm am I!" And having produced or attempted to produce the impression that man is so vile as not to be really worth saving, invite divine grace to the incompatible task of doing what is not worth doing.

We are not going to underestimate the bad signi-

ficance of sin, but sin is bad not only, as we have elsewhere remarked, because it is against God, but just as much because it is against ourselves. A black spot is very nearly as black when seen against a sheet of white paper as when seen against the sun. If human nature is inherently vile, then the most commendable and consistent thing it can do is to do vile things. The depth of our fall is to be measured only by the height from which we have fallen. So that the very word "fall" is suggestive of altitude. A dog cannot sin because he is by nature at the bottom and no moral altitude is given him to drop from.

Sin is related to the moral constitution as disease is to the physical. Health we recognize as our normal condition, and sickness as a mere contingent. So that if we are ill we are not satisfied till there has been effected in us complete recovery. We have so much respect for our body that it discontents us unless all its organs function perfectly. If we cherished the same low estimate of our body that some of our theology cherishes of our soul then we should accept invalidism as our normal condition, be satisfied with it, and enjoy ill health. As it is, we estimate our present physical condition from the standard of perfect health, and because of that allow to invalidism no substantial place in our bodily creed; and whatever our decrepitude it is a physique in its

absolute completeness that is the criterion of our estimate and the aim of our endeavor.

We have then an ambition for our bodies that we have not for our souls. When we are physically ill we try to get well. When we are morally ill we only try to get a little better. The souls of those in the pew are not, as a rule, thrilled with the ideal of perfection, and the preacher, embarrassed by the knowledge of that fact, is hesitant in his insistence upon the doctrine of perfection.

And they are not thrilled with the ideal for the reason, in part at least, that the ideal is made insufficiently familiar to their regard. We teach our congregation to imitate Christ, but only half-heartedly do we insist upon their becoming reproductions of Christ in all that relates to the moral and the spiritual life. We are afraid we shall lose our hold upon them if we deal with them too urgently and are strenuous and exacting in our demands upon them. We allow them to be satisfied with themselves if they have squared thought, feeling and act to what is only approximately ideal.

Or I might state it by saying that we as preachers do not encourage the members of our congregations to cherish toward themselves the respect due to themselves in virtue of the dignity inherent in their constitutional make-up. In a way they reverence the

divine, but they do not reverence the human. They call themselves children of God, and once in a while in their impassioned moments they venture to adopt the Scriptural appellative and to designate themselves God's offspring.

The sentiment they entertain toward themselves is not such that were there no other God they would feel moved to prostrate themselves in worship before the presence of their own souls. I do not mean idolize themselves,—we do that enough already,—I mean worship themselves, thrilled with the sense of their own unspeakableness, stand in an attitude of holy amazement before the incomprehensible mystery of their own being, alive to the sense of what it means to be able to translate into terms of everyday speech the silent language that is traced in the forms of nature, that first great volume of divine revelation, competent to think the thoughts of Almighty God over after him, to gather up in their affections the interests of all his children, to feel the pulsings of the infinite heart, to probe imaginatively the depths of the eternal past, to crowd their intuitions up toward the dim heights of the eternal future, and to realize that years and centuries are too contracted to match the expansive possibilities of their souls, and that to live as long as God lives is the least that can satisfy the capabilities and the ambitions of the souls to which

the Great One, who is both Father and Mother, has given birth.

It is a thing for us to remember, as preachers, that people never surpass the line laid down for themselves in the expectations which they cherish for themselves. Neither on the other hand will they fall very far short of that line. When the distance between the character one allows to himself and the ideal he cherishes for himself becomes more than about so great, the pain induced by a sense of that distance provokes to the improvement of character. A man will not do a bad thing when the pleasure experienced in doing it is less than the self-contempt excited by the doing of it. The security against wrong-doing lies in part, then, in a sense of insult done to ourselves by the wrong-doing. The thinner the skin the slighter the prick needed in order to disquiet the underlying nerves.

Our preaching, therefore, must be of a character to induce moral sensitiveness. Everything, then, that makes for higher ideals makes for character. We never realize how much dust there is in the air till, through a pinhole in the wall, we let a single sunbeam strike through into a room otherwise dark. I have immense confidence in light considered as an energy of redemption. We may be so black as to hate it, but we are so human as to be fascinated by it, as the blaze charms the moth even though it singes its wings.

And the joy and comfort in preaching is that there is soundness enough left in any and every heart to feel the force of all this, remembering always that it is the soundness in men's hearts that we are to address ourselves to, and not the unsoundness. The sheep lost upon the mountains was a lost sheep, but a sheep still and valuable enough still to warrant going in pursuit of it.

So that a good text to preach from, and frequently, too, is, "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father who is in heaven is perfect." Much as we may sometimes shrink from laying upon the hearts of our congregations the burden of so exacting a doctrine, I am persuaded that the great mass of our hearers have a respect for moral thoroughness that they do not have for any kind of moral compromise. Religion suffers more from being belittled in the pulpit than from being magnified, from being dealt out in homœopathic than from being administered in allopathic applications.

There prevails even among the irreligious, the conviction that religion, whatever it may be, is such a thing that it ought to do a great deal for people. So that the more exacting the demands that the pulpit makes upon the pews, and the more exacting the demands that the pews make upon themselves, the more there is accomplished toward maintaining the

respect naturally and popularly cherished for religion, and the greater the consequent facility in securing for it popular adherence.

Any object regarded as being possessed of value becomes increasingly valuable in people's esteem by the very difficulty involved in securing it, so that any pulpit that makes religion easy makes it unpopular, by leading men to feel that if that is all there is to it, there is no clearly distinguished difference between that and no religion, and therefore no necessity for concerning one's self about it. It is like the case of a man who will travel four thousand miles to climb a fifteen thousand foot mountain, who will not bestir himself out of his dooryard to ascend a hundred foot hillock only a stone's throw distant. In the latter case, there is in point of altitude so little difference between the level of the two, that what little widening of prospect might be gained would not be sufficient to pay for the trouble.

It is for that reason that we weaken the cause, whose strength it is our ambition to maintain, whenever we preach the doctrine of an upright life in a way to hold it out of relations with law considered as involved in the divine will and the divine righteousness. That is only a rather labored way of saying that a Christian pulpit is no place to present morality.

In the scheme supposed to be promulgated from an evangelical pulpit there is no such thing as morality considered apart from religion. It is a waste of time to try to teach people, old or young, to do right, except as what we call "right" is something which is guaranteed by divine sanctions. That is the significance of the Old Testament story that the Decalogue was written by the finger of God. It means that what is right is something that God is back of,—not right because people have agreed to call it right, not right because it would seem to be a safer rule to go by, and one that is perhaps more likely to lead on to prosperity, nor even because it is more consonant with people's ethical taste, but right because, as I said, it is involved in the will and righteousness of God.

That puts morality where it belongs. So far from its being something more or less distinct from religion, it is involved in religion, because every act of man stands in definite and prescribed relations to God's will. Just as there are lines divinely laid down from the foundation of the world, to which all the processes of the flowers, the seas and the stars conform, so there are lines of obligation divinely established from the foundation of the world to which it is intended that all the acts and the entire behavior of men shall conform.

We have to tell the members of our congregations that when we sin we do not sin against each other, nor against the rules of society, but against God. When David came to himself in the matter of Uriah and Bathsheba, he did not say that it was against either of these that he had sinned. His words were, "Against thee, O God, and thee only have I sinned." Viewed from a Christian pulpit's standpoint, morality is not a thing to talk about. Even the word "morality" does not, I believe, once occur in the Bible. It is the term which is used in an ungodly way to represent the idea of respectable behavior being maintained without any reference to God's will in the matter. It is a godless word, an unbiblical and irreligious word.

Such points as this I emphasize here because it discloses the inner tendencies of men's mind, the processes by which it works when left to itself, the way in which it gravitates away from what is ideally prescribed; and so gives us something very deliberately and intelligently to address ourselves to in all our sermonic dealings.

A thorough appreciation of what man is ideally and a similarly thorough appreciation of the intellectual and moral vagaries into which the ideal man has lapsed, the intricacies into which the threads of his thinking have become ensnarled, and the methods

and motives by which he has become shaken off from the foundation upon which humanness was originally established,—all of this the pulpit needs to be thoroughly versed in.

Healthy prescription always depends on safe diagnosis, and a preacher who does not know both the ideal man and the man actual, is no more fitted to preach than a physician is qualified to practice who is not familiar with anatomy and physiology, both normal and abnormal. While we do not as ministers and in our preparation for the ministry pursue the monastic life, yet there is after all a flavor of monasticism about it. We easily and almost irresistibly think and study ourselves out of touch with the secular life.

I prize, more than I can tell, the years which I spent in purely secular pursuits before entering college, also the years that I spent as a secular instructor after graduating from college, and at a time when I had not the ministry at all in view; also some interesting, even if rather trying, experiences which I have had since my ministry commenced, and which gave me more insight into human nature in its luxurious variety of qualities and types than I could have acquired in any theological seminary in the course of a thousand years.

But that is rather in the nature of a parenthesis. One word more about the legalities of life. We have spoken of the fact that, rightly construed, in everything that a man does there is some eternal law that is exactly and imperiously relevant to each particular act. And there is nothing more offensive to the natural heart in all that sphere of action where he exercises what he is pleased to call his free will than to be made to feel that he is working in the presence of objective authority. It is always, under such circumstance, a case of will confronting will and that is, in the very nature, irritating, all the way from the infant to the octogenarian.

It is a state of things that we do not kick against till we come into the domain where prevail the principles of right and wrong. In the erection of a building we do not quarrel with the plumb-line nor strive to replace perpendicularity and horizontality by any obliquities of our own originating. By the quietness and unresisting good nature with which, in that instance, we submit to what is, without trying to repeal or amend it, we show our respect for objective authority.

Then there is the matter of a monetary standard. A recent presidential election turned on that question. Some of our people did not want any standard, or I should say that they wanted two, which is the same

thing really as not wanting any. In matters entirely outside of moral considerations, no man any longer estimates things by his feelings, nor weighs them by his imagination or preference, or measures them by the length of his own particular forearm, but measures them by the gauge that is the ten-millionth part of the earth's meridian quadrant.

Which is to say that he renounces himself considered as standard of computation, and takes as his tape-line a quotation from the great globe. And we never find any fault with it, nor do we, except where it is a matter of personal and selfish interest to ourselves and the principles of right and wrong begin to become involved, go about to construct a yard-stick with as many inches as may happen to suit our individual convenience, or, as in the instance of the sugar trust, doctor our scales in a way to contradict the testimony of gravity.

I went into a jeweler's lately to see how my watch was running. The air was full of the gentle throb of all sorts of ticking apparatus, such as one always hears in a jeweler's shop. But there was one tick that beat itself out from second to second with a distinctness and a certain air of authoritativeness, chronometric lordliness, that seemed to say: "Hear me tick, and if you want to know what time it is, listen to me, and I will tell you. I do not tick by

fancy, I tick by the law of the universe, and by the will of God."

I said to the jeweler, "What is it? Where does it come from?" "It comes from Washington," he answered. Well, all sorts of things come from Washington, so that was no relief to me. But he added, "It comes from the Washington observatory." That took the matter higher up, and made it begin to mean something. "But where does the Washington observatory get it?" "Gets it from the sun." That settled the matter for me. A quotation from the firmament. Telephoned down from the Throne.

And so as the jeweler's apparatus had the whole of God's universe back of it, and as it was no selfish concern of mine to have my watch set backward or forward a little, I gave it to him to adjust, so as to have it tick in beat with the pace of the firmament and the mind of God. That is an instance of respect shown to constituted divine authority; and there would have been no impulse on my part to have my watch run by anything but standard time unless, for some reason of my own, and in pursuance of some individual purpose of mine, I had wanted my watch to show an hour that I had myself personally fixed upon—had wanted, that is, to set up a little chronometric observatory electrically disconnected from the

one that interprets time according as time is in the Almighty thought.

Now we have to impress it upon our people that every thought, feeling and action stands properly in just as rigid relation to the movement of God's thought as the second-hand of every watch in the world stands related to God's horologue of the ages, and that there is no moral liberty proper to man other than what is consistent with that fact, no proper margin of moral choice that is any broader than the margin of physical choice pertinent to the flower in its development from the germ or to the planet in its revolution about the sun; and that the most that we can mean by liberty in the moral sphere is the ability to run without any conscious self-constraint or self-restraint, upon the divinely constructed and ballasted track of moral duty,—righteousness of life become our second nature, so in sympathy with God's will as to be able to do that will without being conscious of it as an objective propulsion, as the stars describe their orbits without any sense of the gravity that holds them to their orbits; able, that is, to think, feel and act by the power of a renewed life.

The purpose of our discussion today has not been at all to give a systematic analysis of the inner workings of the human life and its experiences, but only

to draw attention to those experiences as constituting the object to which as preachers we have to address ourselves, or as constituting the conditions which require to lie closely to our own understanding and thought while our appeal is being made. We must know who and what it is that we are talking to. Humanness is the instrument which it is the function of the preacher to play upon, and he must know how to finger the manual in order to draw the desired response from the instrument's various registers.

"The proper study of mankind is man" is an injunction peculiarly pertinent to the preacher, even if not interpreted in precisely the sense in which Pope intended it,—humanness in its ideality as evinced in the single instance of Jesus Christ; humanness in its abnormal conditions. In some respects abnormal mental and moral anatomy, even of the extreme kind, serves the preacher the best, even as analogous abnormal physical anatomy and physiology have an especial value for the physician.

Had time allowed I should have liked to speak of the way in which the legitimate operations of the conscience, and of the intellect when applied to religious questions, are swerved from their normal course by the influences exerted by scientific inquiry, particularly when that inquiry is amateurishly prosecuted and carried only to a sophomoric stage.

I have, however, accomplished the object which I had in view, if, instead of foolishly trying to cover the entire territory, I have simply suggested something as to the extent of that territory, its intrinsic interest, and the essential service which careful acquaintance with it renders to the preacher in his effort to bring the hidden things of God to the hidden place in the heart of man.

IV

LOVE CONSIDERED AS A DYNAMIC

The gospel is not an idea but a passion, the outflow upon the world of an infinite affection. This fact should both determine the spirit in which we seek to qualify ourselves for the work of the pulpit and put its constant complexion upon the method in which we discharge the duties of the ministerial office.

I have therefore undertaken to say something respecting the dynamic efficiency of the heart, moved thereto by the conviction that in our attempts to arrive at the secret of things, human and divine, an over-emphasis is laid upon educated thought and an under-emphasis laid upon cultivated affection, and that the brain is allowed to crowd out the heart in the process of arriving at truth and in the work of making truth effective in individual life and in social relation.

While we shall carefully guard against the charge of disparaging the intellectual energies, and while we have no purpose of exhibiting brain and heart as though they were mutually antagonistic, yet our present distinct purpose is to put to the fore the

claims of our affectional nature, and that not only because of the power that resides in our emotional faculty, but because the liberal exercise of that faculty is essential to rendering even our intellectual attainments capable of the best and largest results.

We are not anxious to state what it is exactly that we mean by heart. There is a broad meaning in the word, and by defining it we should narrow it. That is the effect of definition always. Definitions are in this respect like pictures of natural scenery, which always miss the very thing most needed to make them complete; like a photograph of an apple orchard in bloom, which excludes both color and perfume.

"Heart" is a word that is constantly recurring in Scripture. "Brain" is, I believe, a term that is not once found there. Heart, in the sense in which it is currently understood, suggests the warm center of life. When we say of a man that he has a good deal of heart we mean that he is summery; he may be brilliant and he may not; but he is such sort of a person that snuggling up to him away from the chilly exposure, that there is so much of, is like getting around upon the south side of the house in midwinter, and letting the sunshine feel of us, and watching the snow slide off the twigs, and the tear-drops swell on the points of the pendent icicles.

We are not trying to be precise. Precision is fatal. But there is what we may call the tropical side of a man. There is what admits of being termed the heart of civilization and the heart of religion, as opposed to its brain and gristle. And there is what, without anything like fancifulness, could be designated the tropical area of the Bible, as distinguished from other portions that show a lower temperature and lie nearer the Pole.

The emphasis of current thought lies on light, rather than on heat. A bright man is listed at a higher figure than a man with fervid impulses. Brain counts for a good deal more today than heart does. It will win more applause and draw a larger salary. Emotion we are a little afraid of. We are cautioned not to let our feelings run away with us. We want to know that a conclusion has been reached in cold blood before we are disposed to submit our judgment to it. Exuberance is in bad odor.

We are not disposed to surrender ourselves to any influence or impression that we cannot intellectually construe. Criticism deals with art, literature, and even the word of God much in the temper with which a surveyor plots a piece of ground with theodolite and chain. The current demand is for ideas. There is a great deal of highly disciplined intelligence that finds its complete satisfaction in the mere process of

inspecting such clever and glistening forms of truth as may come before it, and inspecting them with an exclusive eye to their cleverness and glisten, something perhaps as we look at the stars and are interested in their brilliancy without its occurring to us to wonder what, if anything, they have to do with us or we with them, or whether there is anything back of their entertaining sparkle that relates them to us or to our world.

Eyes are so related to light that luminous things amuse them. Intelligence is so related to scintillant forms of truth that those forms interest and entertain it; and the entertainment may all be there without the thought having begun even to touch the vital tissues which the form defines and conceals. A cold thought has very little of the power of penetration in it. And yet that is the attitude in which, in general, members of a cultivated community, educated members of a congregation, are likely to stand toward the truth.

I can cite as an extreme instance of that the fact that during the four years I was in college I did not, I suppose, hear more than that number of discourses that lifted my moral tone or quickened my spiritual life. This is not a reflection on the preaching, and I do not care to think that it is any reflection on me. It means simply that I brought to the preaching the

same faculties of mind precisely that I exercised during the rest of the week on Greek roots and algebraic equations. That is one reason why the work of college chaplains is so often a failure, that their deliverances, however true to Scripture and however pat to human needs, are so likely to be surveyed by their hearers through purely intellectual spectacles.

And what holds true of a student community is true, only in less degree perhaps, of any community. People who have learned to think, love to think, and enjoy having something given them that they can think upon; something as eyes that can see love to look at rockets, lightning and glow-worms. It means nothing in particular. Any power that we have is restless till opportunity is afforded it for exercise. But the fact that one can think keenly and takes pleasure in it is not to be understood as symptomatic, in any slightest degree, of interest in the interior substance of the truth, with whose delightful exterior it has been so fascinatedly busy.

It is something to reflect upon the amount of mental energy that a man can expend upon matters of Christian truth, for example, upon the verbal forms of Christian truth and the relation of those forms to each other, without being touched, still less being quickened, by the realities that those forms

were intended to represent. When a speaker is handling a truth, it may be of religion or philosophy, or whatever else, if he does it with dexterity, and if in the process his own mind is quickened into unusual activity, his activity communicates itself to the minds of his hearers, as the movement of one wheel communicates itself to the companion wheel into which it gears.

Some time ago I asked a member of my church whether he thought a certain friend of his who had lately taken to church-going, and who was exceptionally brainy, was really becoming religious. "Oh, no," he said; "he likes to hear preaching because he has an active mind and enjoys the way in which things are homiletically laid out before him."

Mere intellectual activity upon religious themes is not religion any more than working a flying trapeze in a church is what the Bible means by "Godly exercise." An ox can devour the painting accidentally left upon the easel in the pasture where he is grazing, without becoming himself æsthetic.

It is the special function of pure intellect to deal with the forms of truth, to deal with the shell within which truth is encased, without, necessarily, any practical regard being had to what the shell encloses; just as little children can play with diamonds, and yet if we take away the diamonds and substitute

cheap white beads, there will be no diminution of their enjoyment because it is the shape and the glisten and not the quality of the interior substance that amuses them.

Matters of the most serious moment can be calculatingly handled; the entire gamut of theological controversy can be thoughtfully run; and that, too, to the maintenance of an unflagging interest; even the great things of God and of the human soul can be treated in terms as adequate to such high themes as is possible to human thought, and yet with no stirring of those deep waters in the human spirit that underlie their fretted intellectual surface.

On the contrary, said Solomon, three thousand years ago, "The issues of life are out of the heart." Passion is axial. Heat is power. Heat is enginery, whatever be the style or order of machinery. In the last analysis there is scarcely a terrestrial activity in ground, sea or air, that does not owe itself to that great sphere of material passion we call the sun. The throb of the sea, the currents of the air, the very coal on your hearth that converts winter into summer and turns evening into daytime, is old sunshine preserved in cold storage till needed for present effects. God means something by all this. It is divine satire on cold-bloodedness; and it is the way that nature takes to rebuke the notion that results in

the intellectual, artistic, moral and spiritual world can be hammered out by cold calculation.

All the best thoughts in the world, into however frosty a form they may since have become chilled, were molded from metal that was once molten. Geology surmises that the world began hot. So every thought that has had a history began as a passion. We can manufacture in cold weather, but all creating is done under a high temperature.

What is true of thought is just as true of art. Art is enthusiasm taken shape. The grand cathedrals are old pulse-beats. The master paintings, and they are all religious, are holy mediæval passion thrown upon canvas. Art is imitative now rather than creative because the thermometer is down. We can make wax work with the mercury at zero, but we cannot grow flowers there.

Moses built the tabernacle, but he patterned it from what he gained a glimpse of when he was up in the mount. We are not criticising draughting tools, but we need a vision of something in the heavens with which to set those tools afire and ablaze.

It is the same over again when we skip from art to ethics. Morality to be safe must be impassioned. Strictly speaking there is nothing statutory about Christianity. The only rules properly obligatory upon us as Christians are those that issue from the

legislative chamber of a renewed heart. Propriety under Moses was a lesson to be learned. Propriety under Jesus Christ is a genius, and like all genius is its own law. No man can be confidently counted on to do right till he does it at the impulse of a warm motive working from within outward. As saith the Lord, "I will put my law in their inward parts and write it in their hearts," the rockiness of Sinai transmuted into an inner passion.

We encounter the same again when we cross over from the territory of morals to that of theology. We cannot read one of St. Paul's Epistles without realizing that it was struck out at a white heat. All the evidences of temperature are both in what he said and in the way he said it. His sentences are passionate. If he were to reappear among us and preach in his old way he would be given lessons in self-restraint. His thoughts are kept in steady glow by a certain inward state of combustion out from which, like so many flashing sparks, his thoughts continually leap. His grammar breaks down under the weight of what he undertakes to load upon it. His paragraphs crack apart under the strain of what gets crowded into them. The links in the chain of his argument melt asunder by the fever of the temperature at which he undertakes to weld them. There is nothing which suggests elaboration, review, revision.

That was the way theology was made 1800 years ago. Only it was not thought of as theology. We never begin to call religious truth theology till the warm blood that was in it has commenced to cool and to coagulate, just as we never think of anatomy till it is a dead body that we are handling. Theology is a precipitate from an old religious experience. All the theology that is in the church today is in the Epistles, but it isn't there as theology. So all the bone-dust that is in the graveyards today was once in society, but it was not there as bone-dust.

Mechanics is not art. Patching is not creating. Doctoring is not regenerating. Intellect is not vision. Calculation is not inspiration. History is not administered by experts. It is heart that composes the core of civilization and of Christianity, not head. The moving energy in the world's history today is not a philosophy but a cross. And the consummating act by which Christ fitted the church for its work was not the founding of a university, but a baptism of the church with the Holy Spirit and with fire.

Feelings, then, are the enginery of life, and thinkings and actings and speakings the machinery through which that enginery works itself out into accomplished result. Other things being equal, the power and sweep of a man's life will be measured by

the intensity of his loyalty, that is to say, by the heatedness of his devotement to the purposes he has in view. In every way success is the child of passion. "Whatsoever ye do, do it heartily," which is Paul's way of discouraging apathetic plodders. What a man cannot do heartily, at least in the better ranges of service, he cannot do. Success is the product of self-expenditure. There is no heat without combustion; although it should be said that a man has no right to burn himself up, for there is always fuel enough at hand to keep the fire flaming. Consumption and production are correlates. Something has got to burn up. Success is short for incineration. Passion is the vestibule to every temple, whether devoted to God or Mammon. That holds in every line of productive activity, scholarship, money-making, art, holiness, evangelization. Enthusiasm is the road-breaker. When you talk of motive power, generating impulse, that is in your bosom, not in your skull.

Christianity is in this particular of a piece with everything else. It is an energy. It is not an idea. It is not a picture, nor a philosophy, nor a theology, nor a memory. It is a producer, it is spiritual dynamic, and of course, then, like everything else that does things, begins in a passion; not brain, although like all passion, amenable to brain; like all

fire, to be restrained from becoming mere conflagration. It is a passion; first of all, it is the passion of him who "so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whoso believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

Redemption is not the outcome of God's intellect. It is love, not thought, warmth, not light. Divine love has been disclosed in intelligent ways, but it is the love itself that makes out the genius of the matter and that does the work; so that a scholar, purely as such, can no more accomplish redemptive work than a mathematician, purely as such, can become a fountain of personal baptism, or than the polar zone can grow flowers.

It is the passion of love, derivative from him who is himself love, that is driving the gospel machinery the whole world over. Argumentation is not an energy. Love is. Love is a peculiar, forceful exercise of personality, whether of God or of man, that works in the human sphere with effects like those that are wrought in the works of nature by the inflowing upon it of warm sunshine and the south wind. Such analogies help us a little to appreciate its meaning, but it is not a thing to be defined, only we can say that love is a warm, subduing force, something very positive, a kind of tropical pressure which a heart that is full of summer temperature exercises over

other hearts that are still bound under the frosty fetters of self-interest, and of those icy bonds of an evil mind that are sure to develop themselves in an atmosphere that is ungenial and cold.

It is the impassioned men that have made history always, religious and secular both. They are pulse to the general body that is listless and waiting. No man has moved the world like Jesus Christ, because no one beside him has embodied so wise, so warm, so divine an enthusiasm. It costs more than thinking, it wears more. An affection, if one's entire soul be invested in it, takes more out of one than an idea does. Our loves we coin from our hearts, our ideas we make up principally as we go along.

Hence it comes about that Christianity easily degenerates from a condition of fervid love to God and man into a condition of highly organized intellectual interest in problems of religious or social or economic truth. Ministers preach political economy from their pulpits only when the fires of Christian devotion have become extinct. It has always been so. So long as feelings remain feelings there is no disposition to analyze and classify them, or to construct them into a system. It would have been as impossible to make a creed on the day of Pentecost as it would have been for Peter to kodak a photograph of Moses and Elias on the Mount of Trans-

figuration. There was too much in the air. A drop of blood has to be taken out of the vein before there will be any disposition to count its corpuscles.

We who have any experimental knowledge of the gospel realize that it is God's own passion of love that carries with it and draws after it all that is essential to the production of perfected Christian character and life. And as love is love in both worlds, upon no other spiritual sustenance can the preacher be more wisely or confidently fed, or with greater assurance and constancy nourish the lives of those to whom he ministers.

There are some things that we can talk about but that we do not experience. On the contrary, there are some things which we experience, but which we cannot as easily talk about. Love is of the latter kind. We see its workings; we feel its workings. It is like gravity, which no one explains, but which is the name that we give to the disposition that objects of the same nature have of drawing toward one another. The word gravity is a convenient one, but explains nothing. The word love is a very convenient one, but explains nothing. The fact, though, that it stands for is a large one. We would like to know more about it, but we can experience it and we do, and that is the richest kind of knowing.

But it is the drawing toward one another of two

souls—gravity translated into the spiritual world. Souls that love recognize themselves in each other. Much more than that we cannot say,—not yet; perhaps we can sometime. It is pleasant to remember that eternity is going to be so long that we shall have time to find out about things.

But to find ourselves reflected in each other is a mutual tribute, and implies an underlying oneness and a certain amount of equality. You can love a person who is inferior to yourself, and yet you love him because you find in him something that is equal to what is the best in yourself: and that gives the touch of equality. And without that touch of equality, without that sense of a certain comradeship, there can be no true intercommunication between person and person. Genuine education is an exchange of personalities.

It is only in the act and relation of love that you and another personally touch and can perfectly commune. It is the only existing relation in which the centers of two separate souls become coincident in such way that there can be an unobstructed flow from one to the other.

There is certainly a kind of mutual access and companionship in identity of opinion, in similarity of taste, in resemblance of occupation. And yet two people may think alike and still be far apart. Two

men working side by side in the same occupation may yet be living in different worlds and each be exempt from the other's influence.

It will serve our purpose also to notice that two souls do not come into contact when there is merely the exercise of authority on the part of one over the other. When you give a command to your servant, even though he obey, you have touched him only in his act, not in his personality. Authority is likely to preclude rather than to promote unhindered exchange between the two. A servant may love his master, but not because he is his master, but in spite of it. The whip may burn the flesh, but it does not warm the soul, rather freezes it. Mount Sinai was hard and cold and was particularly valuable in showing what it was incompetent to do. It was a vast, colossal menace, a kind of immense divine frown—made only the more awful by the lightnings which illuminated it, and the thunders with which it reverberated.

It would seem that a man as thoughtful as Moses would have felt at the time as though some experiment—perhaps we ought rather to say some expedient—less flinty than Sinai would have to be adopted before God and mankind would come to any fair understanding with each other, and before God would avail to gain a grasp upon man's interior life.

We were just saying that the relation of love is the

only one in which the centers of two separate souls become coincident in such a way that there can be an unobstructed flow from one to the other. There is more that is fine and effective in this intercommunication between souls than we sometimes recognize. You touch the organ key and the pipe sings to you. You touch the harpstring and it becomes musically tremulous. You speak to the ear or address the eye and there returns to you a look of recognition. Everything is a kind of instrument waiting to be played upon.

The spirit is also an instrument, most delicate in its make, most sensitive in its responsiveness. The time is mostly passed when people doubted the fact of one mind telling upon another mind, one spirit upon another spirit. It is so evidently the case that the mystery of it no longer shatters or even shakes our belief in it.

The influence—that is to say the inflowing—of one upon another is one of the incontestible facts, and how effective the working of that influence will be will depend upon how near to the center of the personal life it is able to come and exert itself. The effects that we take from others are sometimes of quite a superficial and therefore transitory character. They pass over us as a shadow passes over us, leaving no print behind, or at least, no recognizable print.

Other influences penetrate into a somewhat deeper stratum of experience and life and become permanently woven into life's tissues.

In that way we are continually receiving importations introduced into us by the remote approach to us, or the closer contact with us, of the people among whom we live and move; so that we are, to a very considerable extent, a mass of quotation. Were it possible, it would be an interesting and curious process to dissect ourselves mentally, morally and spiritually and to discover to whom we are indebted for this, that and the other ingredient, respectively, of which we are composed.

Among the variety of operative influences, that which goes deepest is affection. It finds its way where nothing else will. While perhaps there is a hidden spot in each life that is sacred only to itself and the heavenly Spirit, yet love comes nearer to reaching that spot than any other influence. And the point especially to be made is, that it not only reaches there, but that it works there. For love is not merely a sentiment cherished by the party who loves, but I would like to represent it as a kind of personal current passing from the one who loves to the object of that love.

The matter is too serious and too far-reaching in its bearing to indulge in any fanciful treatment of

it, and when I represent affection as a kind of personal current of influence I mean just that.

If you take a potted plant that has been standing in the shade till it begins to show the discouraged aspect incident to being confined in a dark place, and then remove it to a spot where fresh air, warmed by the sunshine, can drift across it, you certainly attribute the consequent altered aspect to the new, clear, genial light and warmth that you have allowed it to respire.

Without undertaking to explain how it is that a more brilliant and tropical atmosphere can so insinuate itself into the plant, and so mix itself in its life, as to create there a kind of resurrection, you nevertheless accept the fact and do not consider that you are indulging in fanciful ideas or fanciful language when you say that between the sunny air and the flower there has been the actual passage of some kind of influence that has penetrated the plant and that has worked within it encouragingly and quickeningly.

What is more, it works in the plants all kinds of result, not limiting itself to one special variety of effect. It not only puts fresh verdancy on the leaves, but a brighter tint in the blossoms, and a general revived appearance as though it had in some way been created anew and been born again. The mystery of this universal inner working we become accustomed

to and do not stop to explain, and simply let it pass by saying that if you want your plant to grow and blossom keep it in the sunshine.

Now it is one of nature's secrets that by a single influence it can produce such a diversity of result; but the same thing precisely occurs over again, only in a finer and more fascinating way, if we transfer our attention from plant life to what goes on in the life and growth of the spirit when the vernal influence of affection is allowed access to it. It is apparent in the home and in the schoolroom. A summer-like domestic atmosphere operates in all variety of ways to the child's upbringing and uplifting. In such environment everything that is in the father and mother, especially in the mother, tends to duplicate itself in the child. First of all, it mellows the child's sensibilities. The mother's love tends to become the child's own love. It is a common thing to say that love begets love. That expression has become proverbial and so we speak it carelessly, but it is exactly the point that I am just now trying to make. Parental affection is an inflowing and tends to foster the rudiments of filial affection.

But the same genial atmosphere operates to promote in the offspring whatever *other* gifts and graces distinguish the parents. For affection is a current that carries over with it whatever freightage is

loaded upon it at the source from whence it flows. So that in such a home the intelligence of the father and mother become duplicated in the child's mental longings and inquiries, and the hearthstone becomes the most perfect seminary in all the world, and all the more beauteous for being so natural and delicate, *a seminary in miniature.*

It is hardly necessary to say that in such temperature of parental affection the moral and religious impulses most naturally and unaffectedly secure their germination and development. A loving home, presided over by a father and mother, who are at the same time priest and priestess of the mysteries of God and of His Son, Jesus Christ, is almost certainly destined to prove to be a little church,—a little home, a little state and a little church, all in one, and therefore the rudiment of all that is finest and sweetest in the collective life of the world.

But we cannot conclude this lecture without briefly adding to the foregoing the fact that love is not only an energy but also an intuition. Love is vision as well as force. It is like a sunbeam which not only puts a complexion upon the surface, but perforates and externalizes what is hidden.

This is true in the relation of man to man. There is a kind of knowledge which we gain of each other while standing to one another in an attitude of cold

speculation, but it is only when we enter into another's life along the track of sympathy that we secure for ourselves genuine admission. There is not in thought that susceptibility that can feel what is hidden beneath the surface. Thought brings us near to people, almost within touch of people, but does not penetrate. We are like the electrons which compose an atom and which revolve about one another at a terrific rate of speed, but that never come quite into actual contact with each other. Distance seems to be the law of nature; but love is supernature, skips the distances, and reaches the goal.

But it is true also in the relation of man to God. Let it be said in all reverence that man and God are a good deal alike, ought to be if we are his offspring. Love is the same in both realms, has in both the same efficiency, whether as a force or as an intuition. We cannot perfectly find out each other by studying each other, but by loving each other; neither can we, say the Scriptures, find out God by searching. We can reason *toward* him but we cannot reason *to* him. The story of the electrons over again: revolution but not contact.

St. John lived eighteen hundred years before Herbert Spencer, but he could have taught Herbert Spencer lessons, if the latter had not been so enamored of his own philosophy as to be oblivious of St.

John's Gospel, for, wrote the Apostle, "He that loveth, knoweth God." Spencer was sound perhaps on his own grounds, but there are more things in heaven and earth than were dreamt of in his philosophy. We are not criticising his philosophy; only in a domain as universal as the truth, it is better not to enclose human speculations within fences that cast what is very likely to be the larger part of truth into realms of outer darkness.

Love then, according to St. John, is a form of vision, a mode of unhindered intuition that travels everywhere, everywhere in the realm of spirit, finds its way into heart, wherever heart is, a species of spiritual telescope that can sweep the four quadrants, that can be turned upon what is near the ground or focused upon what lies in the sky, admitting us to the fellowship of our brethren and letting us into the intimacies of our Heavenly Father. I suppose the Epistles of St. Paul are more attractive to the bare intellect of the world than the Gospel of St. John, but St. John's Gospel lies closer to the world's life, and even St. Paul had to admit that "the greatest of these is love."

V

MINISTERIAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR CIVIC CONDITIONS

Two vitalized institutions, though they be as distinct as Church and State, cannot exist in contact without being mutually influential. Each will tell upon the other. They may tell too much. They may tell too little. They may tell mistakenly, but they will tell. And the question that I attempt to handle today is, To what extent, and in what way the Church, at the inspiration of the ministry and under its leadership, is authorized to exert a determining influence upon civic life.

Whatever my relation to the Church, I have no ambition to see its influence extended over territory that does not belong to it; but it is important to realize what its proper territory is, and how much there is of it. And it is furthermore important to get industriously to work occupying that territory, covering it with the best thought we know how to think and to utter, and with the most discreet and vigorous activity we know how to exercise.

There seems to be a particular propriety in urging this point just at this time. The condition

of things in our larger cities, which are the controlling centers and the storm-centers of American life, is one of continual menace. The causes operating to make them so it does not lie within the scope of my present purpose to enumerate. Mr. Bryce has specifically designated them as our nation's danger-points.

It is not becoming us as Christians to worry about the situation, any more than it is the suitable attitude of the Christian mind to worry in regard to any other matter of concern. Worrying about what is evil simply exhausts the power that might otherwise be employed in helping to correct the evil. And yet frankly the political situation is bad. Periodic spasms of virtue—virtue so extreme as to be almost painful—do not take the place of a steady growth in virtue.

What then can the Church do? Do anything reasonable that it sets its heart and hands to. The Church lacks the courage of its convictions, and is possessed of a purpose almost infinitely narrower than its opportunities. It is timid, and so loosely consolidated that the organized political influences of the State foster that timidity. Solidity of organization is everywhere and always the secret of result. A handful of compacted Spaniards had no difficulty in rending the laxly welded power of the host of Mexi-

cans under Cortez four centuries ago, which would otherwise have been irresistible.

Then again the Church is so afraid of doing what is not ecclesiastically proper, that it leaves undone a host of things that it is ecclesiastically wicked for it to neglect, and has grown more or less oblivious of the times when, under the Hebrew Theocracy, the Church *was* the State, prophets the law-givers and statesmen, and civic administration recognized as leaning back directly upon the throne of God. I am not pleading for a revival of the Old Hebrew Theocracy, but God's throne has to be brought into the business somehow, and not expediency, but righteousness, made the central column around which the social structure shall cluster. That is the ideal which is to be steadily held in front of our thought and purpose, and it is an important function of the pulpit to lead the Church intelligently and inspiringly as well as unrestingly toward the achievement of that ideal.

The Church, in times past and to a very considerable extent even yet, has, through its ministerial representatives, laid an awkward and too exclusive emphasis upon the salvation of individuals, forgetting that in St. John's vision of "the city come down from God" is taught the truth that the final destiny of the race is to find its consummation in a redeemed commonwealth, not in a disintegrated mob of converted

individualities, and that when Christ talks about the kingdom of heaven, he is thinking of the reconstruction of society, not merely of a miscellaneous crowd of men and women separately labeled for transportation to a realm unknown. There is a sense doubtless in which souls have to be saved one at a time, and that I shall notice tomorrow, but even so an individual is a mere vulgar fraction till he is gathered in with his fellows to form an organized whole.

There has been with many so much more disposition to consider religion as a kind of passport to a heavenly world situated somewhere in the future than purpose to make the present world heavenly today, that where we are now has been treated rather as a place to get out of than as one to remain in, with a view to making it so pleasant that one would not care to get out of it at all.

It has always seemed to me that the fact stated in Scripture that Christ spent the interval between his death and his resurrection in the attempt to improve and brighten up the underworld, ought to be accepted by us as indication that there is nothing so bad as not to be redeemable, that in whatever place we are put it is selfish and cowardly to regard it as a point of escape, and that it is a mean kind of evasion in any man when his first thought in regard to the spot he is now occupying is that it offers means of access to

another spot that he expects to like better and to find more comfortable.

To treat the place or the position that we are filling at present as a stepping-stone to a more capacious place or a more responsible position, tends to disqualify us for that position should we ever be elevated to it. That applies to young ministers settled in a small parish as well as to the larger matter which we have just now under consideration.

One fact tending to the disheartenment of ministerial leaders seeking to champion a movement looking to better conditions in society and State is that good people, so many of them, display such a lack of staying power. Depravity is always sprightly, never gets discouraged, never knows when it is beaten, never becomes worried and tired and retires from the field to recuperate.

A wicked man grown old in wickedness will do a bad thing in as fresh and enthusiastic a way as though it were the first time he had done it. There is about it all an exhaustless spontaneity that is fascinating. You almost hesitate to find fault with a bad man for misbehaving, he does it so well and so cheerfully. Virtue, on the contrary, is likely to carry upon it the aspect of pulling up grade. Half of the man goes up and the other half stays down so that he does not really get anywhere.

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Virtue cannot ordinarily be relied upon as confidently as vice to maintain its interest in the cause it is devoted to. So far as relates to civic matters Christians are Christians only during the months of September and October and the first week of November. Politicians are politicians all the year round. "Patient continuance in well doing" is a text that it is becoming to the pulpit to use with a good deal of freedom and frequency.

Few people seem able to keep holy indignation steadily in stock. Indignation is exceedingly tiring and consuming. It is only the saints that require to have inculcated the doctrine of perseverance. There are a great many graces and potencies of character that have a very direct relevancy to public matters, and the pulpit will leave part of its duty undone save as it publishes those graces and potencies in their distinct relation to such matters.

On a critical day in the history of a town or city virtue is more afraid of getting wet than iniquity, more susceptible to atmospheric changes. Vice will go to the polls on foot; virtue waits to be carried. Christians think as much of their religion as sinners do of their commodity, but are more economical in their use of it.

This economy in matters of public life comes perhaps in part from supposing that in civic con-

cerns the ordinary moral obligations are not strictly applicable. It is a good deal of an undertaking to serve God in everything and rather a relief to secularize a part of his kingdom and thus to find a little neutral territory to play in where God is not felt to be standing by and looking on, and where one can do as one likes and God not care.

That was the situation as recorded in Scripture when the Hebrews commenced clamoring for a king. The prophet Samuel had held them with a tighter rein than was altogether comfortable and they reasoned that if in political matters they could have a ruler that was less of a prophet and more like the common run of people, they would be saved the trouble, so far forth, of behaving otherwise than as was convenient. In modern terms, their ambition was for the secularization of their civics.

So that the eighth chapter of the First Book of Samuel is another section of the armory of Scripture truth from which the pulpit can draw in dealing with Christians in their relation to the State, for no more now than in Samuel's days is there the willingness to have the territory of civic concern recognized as lying fully inside the domain of divine government.

And yet at least nine tenths of the questions that come within the range of political life are ethical in their very tissue, and thus fall as definitely within

the legitimate scope of the modern prophet as they did within that of Moses, Samuel or Elijah. That position, however, is not sustained by public sentiment. That I have learned to my own embarrassment and sorrow. There exists a widely prevailing prejudice against anything being said inside of the sanctuary about matters that are distinctly civic, except perhaps to the extent of prayer being offered in behalf of the President and those who are associated with him in authority. It is agreed to allow to the pulpit somewhat more leeway on days of national fasting and thanksgiving, for the reason, I suppose, that those occasions are considered as possessing only a fraction of sabbatical sanctity, allowing therefore a percentage of secularity sufficient for putting in a little work regarding such matters as legislators, aldermen and mayors.

What makes this conservative attitude so inexplicable is that no one objects to pulpit disquisitions on the bad civic conditions that existed three or four thousand years ago, and on the tricky politicians and scheming demagogues that manipulated those conditions to their own advantage. Even that is a tacit confession, both on the part of the pew and the pulpit, that in the days of Moses, David and Elijah the kingdom of God embraced the State and all civic

interests as much as it did the Tabernacle and the Ark of the Covenant.

But under ordinary conditions, when the civic temperature is only normal, and the occasion is not one of national appointment, and election is still some months away, and the Ahabs and Jereboams are pushing their schemes with only moderate enthusiasm, homiletical references to civic concerns are commonly regarded as out of taste and as a postponement of the interests of the kingdom of heaven to those that that kingdom is not much interested in and has nothing in particular to do with.

While saying this, it should at the same time be conceded that there is what I, from my point of view, should consider a wholesome broadening of sermonic interest over a wider range of territory. Religion is coextensive with life, and while it is not to be supposed that any accredited member of our faith would take everything into the pulpit, there seems in that no sufficient reason why he should not take the pulpit into everything.

My conception of the kingdom of heaven is of something that just at this present time is particularly concerned in what is going on at present, in today's Ahabs and Jezebels, rather than in antiquated ones, and in events that make up the national life of today rather than in those that are only the outworn

remains of peoples that are obsolete; it being always understood, however, that such themes are germane to the pulpit only when they are not introduced there with a view to what are known as sensational effects, effects, that is, which are for the purpose of sensation, rather than in pursuit of results which properly aroused feeling is calculated to produce. In the conservative sense of the word preaching is not preaching unless it *is* sensational.

The duty of the twentieth century, as much as it was the duty of Elijah and Jeremiah, is to take eternal principle, and to measure existing conditions and institutions against the principle as standard and as frankly and eloquently as possible to declare the amount of discrepancy between the two.

That does not involve entering into the discussion of political technicalities that have no direct and evident relationship with ethics, nor into the discussion of methods of administration or matters of legislation so far as no distinct moral principle is involved. But as already said, nine tenths of the entire matter is wrought out of moral ingredients, and wherever that is the case the Church itself, and the Church under the leadership of, and in coöperation with, its chosen ministerial representatives, has something to say and is disloyal to itself, and above all to its Divine Head, if it does not say it.

That is the way I feel about it. And when I see in all our large cities, New York, Philadelphia, Chicago, St. Louis, Cincinnati, churches by the hundreds throwing their distinctive emphasis on a heaven that is going to come by and by, and on iniquity that prevailed thirty centuries and more ago, dangling little spotless babies over a Christian font but dumb as an oyster to conditions that ruin children and youth faster than we can baptize them, I am pretty sure that the Church is false to its calling, a traitor to its prerogatives, and condemned by its failure to do what it was divinely organized to do.

It is the kingdoms of *this world*, Scripture tells us, that are to become the kingdom of our Lord, and of his Christ. So that it makes exceedingly little difference how many individual converts the churches make in a year, if in the course of that year something has not been done to elevate the tone of the general life. We ought to work to redeem *this* world, not merely to populate the *next*.

This does not at all mean that I am not fully aware of the splendid efforts that certain individuals and certain societies and institutions are putting forth with a view to purifying society and communicating to the civic conditions of city and state a finer and stronger impulse; and all of that is in the main attributable to influences that are nurtured by the

Church, and fostered in the Church by the preaching of gospel truth. And yet the fact is that the entire situation, social and civic, deplorable, unutterably deplorable, as it is in certain respects, is not mastered, because the churches in their individual membership are not massed with a distinct view to the correction of the situation and its replacement by a better.

The possibilities of godly sentiment, as those possibilities exist in our churches and in our synagogues, are sufficient to do anything and everything that they will coöperate in doing. If in New York, for example, each denomination had its bishop, and there were an archbishop over all, with the inspiration of a prophet, and a prophet possessed withal of something of the absolutism of the old prophet of the Hebrews, it would be about as easy to dissipate the iniquity and the deviltry prevailing in our civic conditions as it is for the rising sun to scatter the mists and evaporate the dew. Evil spirits always keep step with the beat of the devil's drum. The anarchy of the saints is no match for the organization of the sinners.

I am not moved to this way of stating things out of any pessimistic impulse. I believe in the Church and I believe in it tremendously. Its possibilities of effect are enormous, but its experience is too dull and its godliness speckled with too many spots of worldliness to have a clear sense of separateness from the

forces it is set to overcome, and therefore out of condition to achieve its destiny of conquest ideally appointed to it.

It would seem to go without the saying that the State is such sort of edifice that its solidity and permanence are imperiled save as it is constructed in observance of certain well-ascertained principles. The same holds as in ordinary architecture. A certain amount of discretion and of independent taste can be exercised in the putting up of a building, and yet all such independence requires to be subordinated to the principles of the art. In the erection of a building it is the architect that furnishes the principles and it is the builder that applies them under the architect's supervision.

This seems to me to state with approximate accuracy the functions respectively of the Church and of the State—of the churchman and of the man, whether churchman or not, who is charged with the State's legislative, judicial and executive functions.

Now to dispense with the former—the Church—would be to leave the State in the condition in which any structure of wood or stone would be left if, in renunciation of the underlying and eternal principles of architecture, the builder were to go on and put up whatever sort of edifice his own convenience or caprice might suggest, leaving it without underpinning, if

underpinning were expensive, or disregarding the lines of perpendicular and horizontal, if the exigencies of the location suggested it, or if obliquity of vision rendered the appreciation of those lines difficult.

The distinction thus made indicates clearly enough, I should think, the difference between the statesman and the politician. The statesman conforms his acts to the requirement of that which is fundamental and established, works upon long lines and with regard to next year and all the years. The politician extemporizes his procedure, makes up his acts as he goes along, and binds himself only by the exigencies of the moment, and especially by the exigencies of his own ambition or convenience.

This was illustrated in my own state a year or two ago when twenty-five senators, under the influence of graft, we suppose, or its equivalent, voted to dispense with the constitution and to act in contempt of its distinct requirements; or as was illustrated on a smaller scale by a single Albany senator who, upon my asking him what was his first thought, upon a new bill being presented for senatorial action, replied, "My first thought always is, What effect will my attitude toward this bill have upon my political future?" How much of permanent advantage to

the State is obtainable from that sort of legislative equilibrism it is easy to surmise.

It is the function of the Church to announce the principles upon which government requires to be administered in order to the maintenance of that established foundation upon which the security of the State depends, and not only to announce them, but to reiterate them with that unanimity of emphasis which should render the non-observance of them impossible. And if the Church is not too busy with the matter of securing salvation for itself, and with the business of Christianizing the heathen the other side of the globe, it can do it.

I certainly believe in salvation both for ourselves and the pagans abroad, but it is a sad way of evangelizing heathenism elsewhere to foster it in our own midst, and to let it sap the foundations of our Christian civilization at home. If we want to win foreign nations to the American type of Christianity we shall have to do it not merely by exporting missionaries but by giving to the world an illustration of what Christianity will do for the nation that calls itself Christianized.

It is in the interest of foreign missions as well as of home missions that we should be nationally representative of the principles of wholesome Christian faith and doctrine. In these days of rapid inter-

national communication by steam and electricity, what any people is in point of character is known the world over. I have read in papers published as far away as Australia and Tasmania as fair and appreciative an exhibit of the political corruption existing among us as any that I have met in the New York *Sun*, and in some respects more so.

In order that it may be understood by the Christian ministry how heavy is the burden of responsibility resting upon the Church, and in the first instance upon the ministers as leaders and inspirers of the Church, I want to say that not much is to be hoped from politics as at present existing nor from the average newspaper. Please observe the discrimination which is involved in that mode of statement.

Partisan politics—and almost all politicians are partisans—is a system of opportunism, by which we are to understand expediency as opposed to principle, the adoption of any policy that will conduct to quick results. A striking example of that was Bryan's readiness to flirt with Tammany Hall in the presidential campaign in which the battle was waged around bimetallism.

Bryan, as I interpret him, is essentially a godly man. Under ordinary circumstances he would be almost the last to court the association of thieves, grafters and blackmailers of the stripe comprised in

the Fourteenth Street organization. But when it came to be a matter of politics, such Scripture injunction as "Come ye out from among them and be ye separate," no longer obtained. The man who carries his Bible with him into the sanctuary is not certain to put it in his pocket when getting ready to attend a partisan convention or a political mass meeting.

That has been a common feature of our political life in New York City, and there has been no difference between Republicans and Democrats in that respect. There has been such an amalgamation of righteousness and depravity that righteousness becomes despoiled of its natural effect. One of the saddest features of the whole matter is that a man, whatever his original integrity, has hard work to be in politics without losing the power of moral sensitiveness and discrimination. The prevailing political sentiment is a depraved one, and only an exceptionally vigorous constitution can continue to respire corrupt atmosphere without becoming tainted by it.

The fundamental fault consists in not treating moral rectitude as something that covers the four quadrants of life, and in regarding depravity when displayed on civic ground as being a little more tolerable than when displayed on other grounds; taking the gristle out of the normal conscience; watering the Decalogue, and for the sake of carrying

a point stepping down to a cheap level with political tricksters, whom we are bound to love as men, but just as much bound to scorn so far as relates to mutuality of effort in questions that concern the supreme interests of city, state and country. A man, unquestionably godly in some of his impulses, will, when brought into the political arena, hobnob with a perverted wretch of the caucus chamber, touching hands with a low-lived, scheming intriguer, knowing all the time that he is a liar and a scoundrel, and yet, because it is a political pool that they are mixing their issues in, will coalesce with the speckled fraternity with no sense of shame or blush of mortification.

It has been frequently urged upon me that pushing things too far and insisting upon the ideal is inexpedient. I believe that it is a good thing sometimes to do what is inexpedient. Remembering what an ungodly conglomerate crowd Moses had to deal with, how absurdly inexpedient it would have seemed to be for him to draft a scheme of morals so inexpressibly fine that for more than three thousand years it has been attributed to a divine origin. Compromise always puts one more rivet into the bonds of iniquity with which the individual or the State is bound. We may not achieve the ideal at once, but the only way of ever attaining it is to strike for it at once. Jane Addams of Hull House put herself at a commanding

and impregnable position when she insisted upon the policy not simply of seeking to reduce the amount of commercial vice, but of going to work to *exterminate* it. Now there is no political party in existence that will stand for so drastic a programme. If we are striving toward social perfection, and that is the only proper aim of the ministry and the Church, we need expect no help from the politicians. That is why men in politics prefer that the preachers should keep their hands off of civic concerns. Principle and expediency are in deadly conflict with each other. There is no greater relief that could come to the weary, fretted heart of the mayor of New York than to know that henceforth all the ministers of the city were going to confine themselves to what he understands as the simple gospel of Jesus Christ, by which he means a careful avoidance of all moral problems except such as relate themselves to the other world, where he is not known to have expressed himself as expecting to hold anything other than an unofficial position.

Nor any more than from politics can we expect very much from the press. It would be quite unjust to the press to make against it any sweeping allegations. It is much easier to criticise journalism than to be a journalist, and it would be ungenerous to fail to recognize the services which in special lines are

rendered by our better class of newspapers and magazines.

We must in justice, however, remember that they are published and circulated as matter of business, and the purpose of business is to make money, and no man ever does an ideally good thing when the prime motive is shekels.

We cannot criticise a man or a corporation for trying to make a newspaper pay, any more than we could criticise the same man or corporation for trying to make a manufacturing or banking business pay; but with that object primarily in view, the management is anxious for nothing so much as for a large constituency, and that means catering to the people, telling people what they want to hear instead of instructing them in what they ought to know. So that an ideal newspaper cannot be issued in an unideal world and have the business pay. The pulpit is the one only place where the ideal can be published and is expected to be published. And even there it is sometimes difficult to close the financial year with a credit balance.

It is unusual for a newspaper to decry what is bad simply because it is bad, or to eulogize what is good simply because it is good. It is rare to find one that measures men or estimates events from the frank standpoint of absolute righteousness. That is a

function of which the pulpit has the almost exclusive monopoly. Even the best journalistic endeavors in that direction are almost certain to be in some degree thwarted by the prejudice of political partisanship. If you vituperate Democratic wickedness, Republican journals will support you and say all manner of pleasant things about you. And vice versa. If you attack Tammany, in whichever of the two parties the Tammany spirit happens to be incarnated, the anti-Tammany papers will idolize you, not necessarily because they hate iniquity,—for there may be the same amount of iniquity on their own side, although of a more reputable kind perhaps,—but because they hate Tammany. Pulitzer backed me in '94, not because he loved me or was interested in the Decalogue, but because he hated Dana.

Perhaps I can best put the situation before you by a quotation from my own experience, if you will allow it. For instance; suppose I say something today in criticism of the moral obliquity of some Republican compatriot on the Board of Aldermen or of the Albany Legislature. Tomorrow morning a Democratic paper warmly effulgent comes out with something like the following: "The Rev. Dr. Parkhurst, with his customary keenness and vigor, says of Mr. ——— so and so." Then I realize what strength

and encouragement there is in having so powerful a journal as a moral ally.

In the meantime it occurs to me to allude to the ethical irregularity of some member of the Fourteenth Street brotherhood; and on turning, next morning, the pages of the same sympathetic sheet my eye will be greeted by some such headline as this: "More of Parkhurst's blatherings." Same paper.

Please remember that my reference to the press has not been for the purpose of criticising it, but only with a view to illustrating the fact that it is to some other source that we have to look for the securing of ideal, social and civic conditions. That is one of the mischiefs of political administration and party government that it obscures the vision and debases the moral standard of men partisanly inclined, be they Republicans or Democrats, one as much as the other, if not more so.

It is then by the preaching of righteousness, pure and unadulterated, that the vices of society are to be eliminated and the faults and weaknesses of civic conditions corrected; a preaching of righteousness so distinct that it cannot be misunderstood, so concrete that it cannot be misapplied; a preaching by men that are so obsessed by their passion for the ideal that civic obliquity costs them a pang, and at the same time living so close to the world, to the men that are

in it and to the transactions that go on in it, that they can address themselves to those conditions with an intelligence that will command respect and with a sort of prophetic passion that will create courage and purpose in the sound-hearted and create a quaking among the foul spirits with which in our social and civic life we are so disastrously infected.

VI

RESPONSIBILITY OF THE CHURCH TO THE LIFE OF THE TOWN

We are come together this afternoon as a body of Christians, with views differing somewhat, probably, in matters of detail, although substantially identical, but certainly at one with each other in this, that we are sharers, all of us, in one common responsibility.

It is part of our common confession that Christ is the Saviour of the world, and yet he has seen fit so far to put himself under limitations that the progress of the world's redemption is quickened or retarded according to the availability of those whom he has already brought into his kingdom. So that while he is the one original Redeemer, how long it will take to effectuate a world-wide redemption will depend not upon him but upon his Church.

It was God that brought the children of Israel into the Promised Land; but in obedience to his established policy of action he was forty years late in bringing them in, and for the reason that they were not immediately available for his purpose. Practically they held God in check. There is in the woven

web of history a human woof as well as a divine warp, and the world is an entire generation behind what it would have been had not the spies that were sent up to search out the land become panic-stricken by the stature of the Anakims.

There are several reasons why the Church does not stand up to the level of its calling, and one is that it does not altogether realize its calling, and has no defined conception of what it is in the world to do. A feeble sense of purpose is sufficient to neutralize even the most complete possibilities of effect. Ability that does not clearly know what to do with itself is no better than inability.

It is not an uncommon occurrence, indeed it is not at all out of the usual, to find, upon receiving new members into the Church, that they are unable to give a rational account of the step they are taking: and it is not infrequently the case that they will live in it and die in it without at the end being any more able to give a rational account than at the beginning.

Therefore, for the purpose of coming to a clear understanding and with a view to saying something that is fundamental, I lay it down as my basal proposition, that the exclusive work to which the Church is called is to be the instrument in God's hands of stimulating in men the desire, and fostering in them the ability, to become what it lay in God's mind to

have them become when he said, "Let us make man in our image."

Such a proposition affords to the Church a large field of operation, but at the same time indicates the limits within which its operations require to be confined. And we do less that is germane to our calling than we should do if we were not so ready to cross the frontier of our obligation and to occupy ourselves in fields where our churchly license does not authorize us to operate.

The validity of this principle and the method of its application is exemplified by Christ's mode of dealing with the devil-possessed Gadarene. The man was naked. There were two things, therefore, that he needed, inward soundness and outward habiliments. To furnish the first lay within the scope of Christ's ministry; to furnish the second did not. He therefore cast out the evil spirit and left it to the Gadarene to meet contingent necessities in his own way. That is the principle upon which the doctrine of Christ proceeds, that a man will be able to provide for his external needs when everything has been supplied which the gospel is able to furnish toward answering his internal requirements.

It is noticeable that money plays no part in the first chapter of Christian history. Christ disclosed the inner nature of his calling and drew a sharp line

between person and circumstance by making no use of money. He had none to use. He thereby indicated that the growth of his kingdom is to be secured by what the Church does for the inward man, not by what it does for the outward man. He was not a banker, nor a tailor, nor a baker, and when he had raised the dead girl to life he told her parents that he would leave it to them to provide her with something to eat. So of Peter: "Silver and gold have I none, but what I have that give I unto thee. Stand up."

St. Paul initiated the crusade against slavery. His method of doing it is laid down in his brief letter to Philemon. The outward condition of enslavement he did not touch. He maintained no direct warfare upon the institution, neither purchasing the emancipation of Onesimus, nor encouraging him to run away from his master, but the contrary. What he did do was to play off the gospel influence of brotherly love upon the heart of Philemon his master. That is to say, he worked exclusively for internal effects, knowing, which is always the case, that sound inward condition will always, in the long run, create wholesome outward circumstances.

There is no short cut to healthful results. Physicians who try to cure symptoms kill their patients. The function of the Church is to improve the breed.

The issues of life, the Scriptures tell us, are from within. The man must take care of his circumstances, but the Church must take care of the man. It is easier to pay a man's board than it is to qualify him to pay his own board; hence the reliance upon money. There is a feeling abroad that the Church is directly responsible for the hard conditions under which so many people live, directly responsible, I say. I recently received a letter from a workingman who claimed that he received two shillings a day less for his labor than was his due, and he charged up that deficiency to the Church. You see what the Church gets by not keeping itself snugly inside of its own diocese, and by not distinctly announcing to the public what the limits of that diocese are.

Peter sets us an example in that particular by definitely declaring, "We have no money for you; we have something for you, and we are going to give it to you, but it is not shekels." Now it is the disregard of that principle which prompts Christians to issue their check instead of issuing their personality. We encounter a beggar on the street. He wants bread. Whatever his physical hunger, there is in him a big necessity that is far deeper than any gastric craving. He many not know it, but we know it. Nevertheless we flip out ten cents and the incident is closed. We have relieved his circumstance but have

not helped him. We have put a suit of clothes on the naked Gadarene, but we have done nothing towards casting out his devil. We have acted toward him as any pagan might act. There is no Christianity in a dime.

Personality dealing directly with personality is the Christ policy and the apostolic policy. Christ's method of saving the world is just as prescriptive as a method as his doctrine is prescriptive as a doctrine. As things are the personality of the Church, with some exceptions, is not touching the personality of the world. The Church raises money and hires a minister; raises money and pays a choir; raises money and hires Sunday school teachers; raises money and pays a missioner to preach to outside sinners that have no churchly attachment. But the Church in the great body of its membership, in the totality of its life, is as far from the outside masses as it is from Madagascar. We put the meat in the cellar and the salt in the attic and then wonder why the meat does not keep fresh.

Some of us are not as interested as others in trying to save people for the life to come. While thoroughly believing in the future life we believe it is a fine thing to be beautifully, sweetly and soundly human even though there were to be no future life. Goodness is good, whether it last longer or shorter. There are

animals that last but a few days or even a few hours, but they are pleasing to the eye of God so long as they do last.

We have to grant that life does, of necessity, part with some of its significance as soon as it is put under limitations of time. Could we have known before being born what earthly life is, and that life here is all there is to it, and were it then optional with us to be born or not to be born, most of us would, without very much hesitancy, have declined birth. And that so few people, comparatively speaking, commit suicide, is to be taken as proof of a general underlying suspicion that there is something more and larger and better after these few years are finished.

But grand living is grand even without the future, although touched by a superlative splendor by the future; so that, as Christians, while rendering churchly service to men and women in the prospect of the larger life to come, we may not foster the superb possibilities that are in them with too constant an eye to the hereafter, as though true living would commence only upon our arrival yonder, but foster those superb possibilities rather at the impulse of the motive that fine living is fine living under all circumstances, that living of any other kind carries in it the disgrace of moral suicide, and that if we are fit to live in the world we are now in, we shall certainly be fit

to live in any other sphere in which God may subsequently put us. Just enough of future prospect flavors present years with a quality that is indispensable, but too much of it creates a certain haziness and sense of unreality that robs today of its solidity and robustness. So that, as said a moment ago, some of us are more interested in helping to qualify men to live than in trying to prepare them to die, and instead of repudiating this world and throwing at it all the opprobrious epithets of our vocabulary and treating it only as an admirable place to escape from, doing our best to make this world a better world and so sweet and attractive that we shall have no desire to escape from it, assured, as I suppose we are, that this world is as good a one as God knew how to make, and that perhaps we shall not be through with it when we have finished what we call our mortal career.

And then, also, while some of us are disposed to put a certain amount of time limit to the churchly plans we formulate and the churchly service we render, we are likewise disposed to set to them a considerable degree of geographical limitation. Jesus Christ carried upon his heart the entire world and yet, while on earth, never did anything outside of a little fringe of territory on the east coast of the Mediterranean. There was where he gained his touch upon the world, and chose it as being the best specific locality through

which to come within reach of the world at large and man universal.

Providence and birth fixes for each his natural place of working. As Americans our supreme interest will be our country. Patriotism will mean to the Christian Church not so much a grateful appreciation of what our country yields to us in the way of benefits, as it will mean a tender and prayerful desire to see it made an integral part of the kingdom of our Lord. So great is the geographical extent of our country that it constitutes a pretty wide area for our churchly affection to diffuse itself over. Diffusion is regularly at the expense of depth, and intensity varies inversely as the cube of the area.

While, therefore, we shall from time to time send out and send up devout thoughts for the salvation of the world, and more frequently labor with our prayers for the redemption of the United States, Providence seems to indicate to us who are gathered here this afternoon, that we should regard our own town as being practically, so far as we are concerned, all the world that there is.

This is the principle adopted under Nehemiah for the rebuilding of the wall of Jerusalem, where each householder, instead of concerning himself with the reconstruction of the wall in its entirety, occupied himself with only so much of it as lay over against

his own house. Concentrated interest produces the largest results. I have always had an admiration for the policy of Gardner Spring, once pastor of the Brick Church in New York City, who was so exclusively devoted to his own particular field that when he prayed, "Thy Kingdom come," everybody knew that what his prayer really aimed at was the increase in the spirit and membership of the Brick Church.

So far as I have experienced and observed, the Church in each locality, be it city or village, is very far from mastering the life of the locality, either socially, industrially, commercially or politically. It seems not to lie definitely formulated in the mind and heart of each several church that it belongs to it to put itself consciously and deliberately to the work of converting its own precinct, and making it in character and conduct a part of the kingdom of Jesus Christ.

Let us not, however, commit the easy fault of generalization. There is no life and conduct of the city or town apart from the life and conduct of the individual men and women of whom the urban or rural population is composed. People are brought into the kingdom not in crowds or gangs, but man by man, woman by woman. When the husbandman hoes what he calls his field of corn, he does not hoe the field at all, but the hills of corn, one at a time. When I say

then that the Church is not mastering the life of a locality, what I mean is that the individual members of the Church are not mastering the individual members of that locality.

It is never to be forgotten that there is a work, and a most important work, to be done in confirming and building up in the faith those who are already believers, redeemed believers. But only to do as much as that is simply to hold our own and gives no promise of the eventual complete coming of our Lord's kingdom.

Confirming and educating the faith of believers is the prime office of the clergy; but to initiate into Christian belief those who are not believers, to bring men to Christ, as contrasted with building up in Christ, is, I claim, not the function of the clergyman, but of the layman. Some suspicion of the truth of this position appears to have been the impulse leading to the inauguration of what we know as the "Men and Religion Forward Movement." The matter is referred to here because of the opportunity afforded to impress upon ministers their obligation, in the interests of the Christian cause, to teach their congregations that it is sin for a Christian layman to do nothing toward bringing to Christ those who are out of Christ.

Saul was the prime instrument which the Lord

used in tipping the early disciples out of the comfortable nest of the Jerusalem church, putting them upon their own wings and scattering them upon divergent lines of Christian evangelization.

The Apostles, we are told in the eighth chapter of the Acts, remained at Jerusalem. Those who were scattered abroad were the unclerical members of the church at Jerusalem. They were the laymen, but even so, went everywhere preaching the gospel.

"Preaching" is too formal a word to express accurately the idea of the Greek original. It would be more exact to say that they went everywhere telling the story of the gospel. It was a work of communicating to others, in a simple colloquial way that which had been communicated to them in a manner more formal.

The disciples that were scattered by persecution through Judea, Samaria and outlying districts, did not go about talking to the non-Christian populations because the Apostles back in Jerusalem were not discharging their duties, but because they realized that they had themselves a duty to do and an opportunity to avail of. They wanted to fulfil the mission that as believers belonged to them, and were too appreciative of the responsibility resting upon every follower of Christ to make his cause known and his gospel accepted, to be willing to leave all

the responsibility of it resting upon the shoulders of a dozen Apostles. Such neglect of opportunity and evasion of duty and privilege would not have been fair to the Apostles, saying nothing of its indicating a lax loyalty to the cause and to the Lord of the cause. The place where it belonged to the Apostles at that time to remain was Jerusalem. Perhaps the lay Christians—impelled by the natural preference to be ministered to rather than to minister, to appropriate the bread of life rather than to distribute it—would have remained there too had they not been whipped out by the scourge of persecution. But they *were* whipped out and the consequence was that concentric waves of evangelization began expanding themselves in every direction from Jerusalem out.

It would be immodest and unjust to eulogize the faithful activity of the clergy, for while I do not think that, take them as a whole, they are a lazy body of men, yet it cannot be claimed that they have stretched themselves out to the full length of their opportunity; but as a body we have the feeling that we are made responsible for the growth of Christ's kingdom on the earth to a degree that is not justified. The pulpit certainly occupies in relation to the evangelization of the world a position of immense responsibility, but its relation to the Christians in the pews is to a certain extent pictorially illustrated by

the relations which Christ sustained to his disciples in the miracle of the loaves and fishes, so far only as this, that he furnished the bread and fish to the disciples and they did the distributing of it to the multitude.

Please to understand that the parallelism between the two cases consists only in this, that it is true of the preacher, as was true of Christ in the miracle, that he cannot reach the multitude personally and directly. The preacher's prime place is in his pulpit and the members of his church answer to the disciples whose function in the miraculous feeding of the multitude was to distribute what Christ put in their hands to distribute. The bread did not stop with the disciples. They were intermediaries for its distribution.

While not failing to recognize the large number of splendid exceptions which exist and to which our strictures are altogether inapplicable, yet in general there has grown up between clergymen and laymen a distinction so marked and so deeply grooved as to be fruitful in discouraging results. If as large a proportion of the work of orally presenting the truths of the gospel had been left to the Apostles or their official successors as is now being left to the pulpit, Christianity would hardly have survived its first century. The pulpits are not doing the work

and what is more they cannot, and something in the shape of a layman's movement is not only to be desired but demanded, and absolutely demanded, by the conditions of the case, if Christianity is not to lose more and more its hold upon the people, and that it is at the present time losing somewhat of that hold is a fact too evident to be contested.

Mention was made a moment ago of the fact that the sorry and languid condition into which Christianity has fallen is due to a large extent to the sharp line of demarkation that has grown up between the clerical and the non-clerical classes, that is to say between the pulpit and the pew, although it should be remarked that the meagerness of Christian results is hardly a thing to discourage us when we remember the comparatively small amount of direct personal Christian power brought to bear in producing results.

If all the laymen that count themselves Christians were bringing their spiritual energies directly to bear upon the situation,—directly I say, not through hired proxies,—and if then there were nothing more to show in the way of increasing product, there would be ground for disheartenment and reason for the conviction that Christianity is an outworn institution; but not now. Things are moving very well considering the comparatively limited number of those who

are doing the moving. People are waking up to that situation and that is why so much is being said about a laymen's movement.

If there is something to be done, and somebody else will do it, it is human nature to *let* him do it. Out of that fact has in part developed the wide separation now existing between ministers and laymen in the matter of personally seeking to extend to others an experimental knowledge of Christ and of the meaning and power of the Christian faith. The Scripture injunction, "Let him that heareth *say* come," is universally applicable but has been largely forgotten. The gift of spiritual life made over to us in Christ Jesus is itself a commission to be personal instruments for the extension of that life to others. "As my heavenly Father hath sent me, even so send I you."

In the miraculous feeding of the multitude the loaves and fishes put in the hands of the disciples did not stop with the disciples. For those who listen to the preached word and receive the bread of life at the hands of the preacher, to confine that bread to themselves and devote it exclusively to their own personal consumption is the same as it would have been for the disciples to use the loaves and fishes for the satisfaction of their own appetites and to let the multitude go unfed and hungry. I have preached in my pulpit in New York City thirty-three years and

to the extent to which the truth which I have given to the congregation has stopped in the hearts of its members to that extent the thirty-three years have been wasted, so far as bears upon the extension of Christ's kingdom.

Where perhaps the pulpit has itself failed is in omitting to press home upon young Christians that truth more distinctly and constantly, so that as they grew up into years of increasing influence and opportunity the sense of evangelical function would be an increasing factor of experience.

This leads me on to say that to the extent that the members of churches are sincerely Christian, and thoroughly impregnated with the spirit of our holy faith, they will be possessed of the idea that Christianity is the world religion, and destined to prove itself such, to which all other religions are in point of completeness mere approximations; so that non-Christians, whoever they are, and wherever they are, constitute the area germane to Christian endeavor.

There are portions of that area where efforts that are put forth will require to be exercised with very special wisdom and discretion, ground upon which it is exceedingly difficult and delicate to tread, but the delicacy and the difficulty are no sufficient warrant for neglect and evasion, and that such is the fact will be recognized according to the distinctness with

which one appreciates the supreme claims made upon the soul by evangelical Christianity, and I would go even farther than that and say Protestant Christianity.

Underlying all such aggression should be the emphatic realization of the beauty of holiness wherever it exists, and in however attenuated and even tainted a form, be it in Catholic, Jew, Mohammedan or Buddhist. Religion is religion the world over and is to be dealt with as fundamental ground upon which with heavier or lighter pressure all men stand. Our Christianity we shall therefore present not as a displacement of positions already held, but as something supplementary to those positions, in keeping with the words of Christ who said, "I came not to destroy but to fulfil." The principal churches in New York City are moving away from certain parts of the town on the ground that they are occupied by people of means so limited that churches and church services can only with difficulty be maintained, and occupied by Jews and by Catholics.

As to the first class—the poor—Christ struck out for the poor, and the ignorant, and the indecent, knowing that the kingdom of God on earth is like a tree, which, although rained upon and sunlit from the sky, nevertheless grows from the ground up, not from the sky down. The Church has been standing

off from the common people, and now the common people are standing off from the Church, and socialism is appropriating the product and is anti-property, anti-Church and anti-religion. That is what comes from originating a policy of our own for promoting the enlargement of the kingdom.

As for the Jew, if he is as much a Christian as the pure gospel can make him, and as for the Catholic if he is as much a Christian as the pure gospel can make him, then we ought to let them both alone. But Jesus did not let the Jews alone, but laid in them the foundations of his Church; and Luther did not let the Catholics alone, and it is mightily fortunate for us that he did not; and he did not because he realized more distinctly than most Christians what Christianity means, and how wide a difference there is between Christianity that is pure and spiritual and Christianity that is more or less carnal and formal, and also because he had more chivalry than most Christians, and was more ready than most to resist the current instead of floating down with it. He had grace but he had the grit that communicates to grace its efficiency.

Propagandism must always be distinguished by its elements of gracious enticement. There are Mohammedans now that are being touched by Christianity for with their belief in the One Only God

they are some of them willing to regard Christ as being at least an authorized teacher and able to throw some light on the character of the One Only.

All that we can accomplish along such lines will be by work that is distinctly constructive, not pulling down, but building up. I have two hundred born Catholics worshiping in the lecture room of my church every Sunday afternoon. They were organized into a church three or four weeks ago. I do not know whether they would consider themselves Catholics or Protestants. Neither word is ever used in their service. They have the gospel given them, undecorated and undiluted and with no label but simply the label of "Christian." And they like it, and are growing under it. If Mr. Gordiano had started in by telling them that they were a pack of ignorant Catholics, and that their only hope for this life or the life to come was to repent of their delusion and folly and be baptized with the baptism of Martin Luther and John Calvin, the birth and death of the enterprise would have synchronized.

If one method of educating children is better than another we want to avail ourselves of it and give to it all rational publicity. And likewise if in our judgment one style of religion or one style of Christian religion is better calculated to improve the breed than another style, it is incumbent upon us to turn it to

account, to adopt it into our system of operation and without any subterfuge or circumlocution, to put it to the fore unapologized for.

Now there are two ways in which we can operate in fulfilment of our churchly obligation, to the improvement of what I have called the breed, to the change of our social character, to the production of a city, or town that in its external aspects and internal quality shall not constitute so savage a contrast to what is apocalyptically represented as the City of God come down from heaven.

We can work restrictively and we can work reconstructively. The Church has not made its influence very markedly felt along either line. And that is not because there is not Church enough. Where Church is involved arithmetic is not an element. God told Abraham that he could save Sodom by fifty men or by ten men, it made no difference to him which, if they were the right sort of men. Ecclesiastical statistics are almost the most insignificant symptom of efficiency that there is a-going.

One method, then, is what I would call the restrictive. I know something about it. I do not prize it as highly as I once did, but I prize it. It does not directly create righteousness, but it puts obstacles in the path of iniquity. As applied to a local election, it does not, to any considerable extent, make men to

be better men, but it does to some degree operate to prevent them from becoming worse, and may operate temporarily at least to throw the worse elements of the town out of commission even if it does not throw them permanently out of business. Even if successful it is no guarantee as to what the election following will result in and may be nothing more than an oasis in the desert; and that is all that it usually is.

That is the course that our town and city life regularly runs, showing that our restrictive work, our attempt to dislodge the worse element, has done nothing more than scratch the surface of the situation. It has not touched down to the vitals of our public necessity. It has affected our conditions only as caging or filing the teeth of a gorilla affects the gorilla. It has not domesticated him. So long as he is caged he will do no harm. If his teeth are filed they will not cut so deep an incision. But the process has contributed absolutely nothing toward humanizing his bestiality.

We have learned the truth of all this by local experience. There are seasons when our municipal physiognomy in New York City wears a virtuous flush, and we then think that we are municipally recuperated and send out word to Philadelphia and Chicago how well we are; the night-watch is suspended, the nurses discharged and the physicians

have their bills paid. Faithful work has doubtless been done and it is not altogether in vain. The patient has been kept from dying at any rate, and that is something, but health that is sufficiently healthy to maintain itself without some form of medication has not been arrived at.

There remain as many drunkards, as many gamblers, as many murderers, as many prostitutes. The estimated amount now being paid annually in New York City by white servants or white slaves—whichever you may prefer to call them—to their male masters is a little in excess of one hundred and fifty million dollars.

The temporary victory gained by the better element may hinder to some extent the increase of depravity but does not correct depravity, does not convert it into virtue, is not constructive, does not indicate that the immense amount of Church that we have here is functioning in a way to make the town a part of the kingdom of God.

A fact whose serious significance in this connection is not appreciated is that it is not the city that is wicked, but the individuals that inhabit it, man by man, woman by woman. Generalizations are dangerous; they tend to prevent that concentrated individualization of effort that alone contains in it the promise and the power of positive result.

There is no such thing, for example, as the social evil apart from the individual men and women that are licentious. To deal with that matter by a system of generalization, to compose essays about it, to constitute boards of commissioners to devise schemes for getting the mastery of it, as though it were some vast entity that could be handled in the lump, is to confuse the mind, and to conceal from it the fact that the matter reduces to the perfectly simple question that Mr. Smith is a libertine and Mrs. or Miss Jones is a prostitute and that they both need to be converted.

There is no problem about it. It is not necessary to send anybody to Europe to investigate foreign conditions. The simple fact is and the plain English of it is, that man has beastly impulses and is very likely to yield to them, and that a great many do yield to them. That is the beginning and the end of it and all that there is between.

Now this policy of individualized work indicates the proper and peculiar function of the Church. I know very well what the other kind means and that for permanency and depth of result it is utterly inadequate. I have tried it and I know its worth and its worthlessness. The business of the Church is to bring people into the kingdom of heaven, one by one;

the unit method is the only method. That was Christ's policy, and Christ's policy is prescriptive.

He picked twelve men, picked them one by one. The crowd ran after him, but he did not run after the crowd, but avoided it rather, and when he could not otherwise escape it, took a boat and shoved out to sea, or fed it and sent it home.

It is easier and pleasanter in our efforts for the world's improvement to generalize than it is to particularize. It is a symptom of human conceit to prefer working in large ways to working in ways more limited. There is more in it that is dramatic. It is human nature to want to make a spectacle of one's self. The qualitative is not in as high repute as the quantitative. We put upon our own work and the work of others an arithmetic estimate.

Christ did not attempt to convert the world, nor even Palestine, nor even Galilee or Judea, but only twelve men, each one a man by himself.

If when Christ had started in to gather together his little group of disciples he had published an advertisement that he wanted to have collected a congregation of all the fishermen doing business along the shores of the sea of Galilee in order that he might have an opportunity to persuade them to give up their business and engage in another line of pursuit, they, in the first place, would not have

responded to the advertisement, and, in the second place, of those who might have come, out of curiosity probably, none, or few if any, would have forsaken their boats and fishing-tackle and have thrown in their lot with the new adventurer.

There needs the personal touch, and that is largely sacrificed in a crowd. The Samaritan woman, standing alone with Jesus at Jacob's well, was easily drawn away from her previous life and became herself presently an effective gospel teacher; but this would scarcely have occurred had he talked *to* her as one of a congregation, instead of talking *with* her in a manner of gentle, familiar intercourse.

There is in this matter of individualizing effort for Christ that which gives both to preacher and people something serious to think upon. We are somewhat off from the track upon which Christ did his effective work and are upon a track of our own choosing which seems to be condemned by the feebleness of the accruing results.

This does not obviate the necessity for places of public worship. Christ himself honored the temple and preached in a synagogue; but the work of his that was fundamental, that laid the basis upon which all subsequent work has been placed, was done while he was in the intimate attitude of face to face relation with such ones as he sought to draw under his

authority and power and imbue with his spirit. Whether human or divine, it is personality after all that tells, and personality too in its direct and close and individualized pressure upon the one soul that it seeks to influence.

VII

DEALING WITH THE FUNDAMENTALS

It would have been greatly to the advantage of the religious world if it had clung more closely and more constantly to the great fundamental truths of our holy faith. It would have nurtured more effectively our intellectual powers, for great believing makes great knowing. It would have created deeper soil in which the derivative truths of the gospel would have found for themselves more secure rooting; and in that way would have operated to hold believers together in a more binding fellowship in the face of the divisive influence exerted by the less basic doctrines of Christianity.

It is on that account that we who preach would be rendering to our congregations a special and essential service if we would hold before them, at a somewhat different angle than is usual, the lessons comprised in what we sometimes designate as the back part of the Bible.

There is a certain majesty of tone and representation characterizing the Old Testament Scripture, which in less degree distinguishes the New. Each of the two has its own distinctive service to render. We

are sensible of moving in a different region of thought and sentiment on moving over from the territory of the earlier part of the Bible to the newer part. One makes a mistake in forgetting that, in divine truth as in geography, it takes two continents to complete the world. Or, to vary the illustration, the older and more colossal verities of the Hebrew Bible concur with the supplementary gospel in something the same way as that in which the heavier foundations of an edifice combine with the superstructure to the production of the completed building, whose perfection is composed not of beauty alone but of beauty and stability.

Consistently with the contents of the Old Bible, and with the requirements of a safe theology and of a robust Christian character and life, I have found myself more and more constrained, by the condition of current thought, to lay a steadily increasing emphasis upon two features of God's character that find themselves set forth with special insistence in the Hebrew Bible; the first of these is his immutability.

"The word of our God shall stand forever." The word "stand" is a great word, full of Saxon ring. St. Paul uses it effectively in his charge to the Ephesian Christians: "Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all things to

stand. Stand therefore." Everything with which we are familiar is in a state of flux, the victim of change. The air is full of currents and so are the rivers and the seas. Night alternates with day. The seasons replace each other. The heavens are an airy mass of instability. Our bodies are pursuing an uninterrupted career of decay and recovery, death and resurrection, in infinitesimal installments. Even considered in our interior condition of mind and sentiment, were we to meet ourselves as we were thirty or forty years ago, we should scarcely know ourselves. Mutation is the law of the universe. "The grass withereth, the flower fadeth, but the word of our God shall stand forever." "With whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning."

So considered, the divine character makes no appeal to sentiment. The rock upon which we construct may guarantee the security of the building we erect upon it, yet so far forth is destitute of all affectional quality. Neither massiveness or flintiness is in itself lovable. The eternal unchangeableness of God is, when viewed in itself, unseasoned by any gospel flavor. It may utilize itself in the service of the gospel, but is not itself gospel. The substructure of the house you live in may utilize itself in the service of the apartments you occupy, but is not itself habitable.

In our reading of the Bible, particularly of the Old Testament and still more particularly of the Psalms, we have observed with how great frequency the steadfastness of God is emphasized and how often it is represented under the figure of a rock. Eternal solidity was the aspect under which God disclosed himself to the Hebrew mind. Familiar examples, all of them taken from the Psalms, are the following: "Unto thee will I cry, O Lord, my rock"; "Thou art my rock and my fortress"; "Lead me unto the rock that is higher than I"; "God only is my rock"; "God is the rock of my heart and my portion forever." It is written in the prophecy of Isaiah, "In the Lord Jehovah is the rock of ages."

There is a quiet sublimity about such portraiture that was a feature of Hebrew faith and consequently a feature of Hebrew life. If our character determines for us to some extent our conception of God, our conception of God also determines for us our character. We shall not be altogether unlike the thing that we realize God to be,—not simply what we picture him or imagine him to be, but what we feel him as he is, is the final secret of the human soul's true godliness. It is therefore that we study him as we are doing this afternoon, not that we may carry away an intellectual portrait of him to be hung before our thoughts for occasional inspection, but that by

holding ourselves close to him in this character which is comprised in him we may have the like character fostered in ourselves, in accordance with that law of all culture whereby we grow into the likeness of that which we behold.

And so I say that that experience which the great religious statesmen of Hebrew times had of a certain rigidity inherent in the Divine Being reproduced that quality in themselves and made them the towers of strength which the history of those days demonstrated them to have been.

Undoubtedly to use the word "rigidity" as expressive of any feature of God's character is liable to produce a degree of surprise if not of resentment. That liability is in part the reason why I have used it, for such an effect it ought not to produce. And I would go still farther and say that the liability to be so affected by the use of the term as an expression of one aspect of God's being is one of the prevalent and serious defects in the thoughts which men have of God at the present time, a defect therefore which naturally reproduces itself in the present-day character and actions of men, for, as remarked a moment ago, men will very largely be what they sincerely realize God to be. And that that feature of rigidity is one which asserts itself less emphatically now than in the times of old Hebrew nobility is made evident

by everything like an appreciative reading of the Hebrew Scriptures; and that it asserts itself less emphatically now than fifty years ago is easily enough recognized by those who have followed the drift of religious tendency during the past half century.

Rigidity, however, is not obstinacy. Obstinacy is pride of will; it is the desire to have one's way for the sake of having it. It is a mean quality and is the product of human littleness and would be the product of divine littleness if the divine could be little. Great things can be explained by small; it is that feature in a human parent, rigidity is, by which he is held fixed and unrelenting in the grasp of those principles of character and administration in which he has become established and which he cherishes as criterion of conduct and as rule of government. It is not antagonistic to affection, but it lies back of affection; may be exceedingly serviceable to affection, as the rocky hills give support to the drapery of verdure with which their slopes are clad; but the rockiness is not itself verdure, nor fragrance, nor blossom.

And those are the best and the greatest fathers. There may not be in them much or even any of that affectionate pliancy that we are more likely to find on the maternal side and to which the child is apt to resort in its efforts to secure for itself those things

which paternal fixity of principle may disallow. And there may be sometimes in such fathers a certain lack of graciousness that leaves the rigidity bare and too much in evidence to render to the children its best effects, for, valuable as foundation stone is, it serves its purpose best when built over with superstructure; and, massive and stalwart as are the hills of granite, they make their sweetest contributions to the landscape when they are so mantled with a vesture of living green that we are able to feel the massiveness of them without being made too conscious of the unsentimental geology out of which that massiveness is composed.

And yet, when we have said all of that, there has been no abandonment of the position here contended for. The human father, loyal to the principles of character and of administrative rectitude in which he stands intrenched, if he be a true father, will not yield to the child's attempt to wrench him from the grip of those principles, cannot yield without a breach of fatherhood. The child must bend to the father and not the father to the child, and, if the child could but know enough to realize all that that means, it would be the child's supreme joy that to it and not to the father belongs the privilege of pliancy.

That, then, is the first fact that comes to the front in all fatherhood, human and divine, and therefore

it is to the setting forth of that fact that the introductory portions of Scripture revelation are devoted. The old Hebrew Bible is a great book, and those who never respire its atmosphere nor allow their thoughts to move through the superb and massive scenery of its delineations of the Divine Being, deprive themselves of a religious tonic as essential to strong and elevated living today as it was before the times of the Advent, when the coming of the Lord at Bethlehem lay in the thought of the world only as a great prophetic dream.

Christ never declined the Old Testament. We must never forget that that was the only Bible there was when he lived and preached. That he overspread with a vesture of warm light, or with a mantle of alluring verdure, the stern heights of old unyielding truth no man who knows the gospel will be able to deny; but neither the warm light nor the alluring verdure has rubbed out the rocky heights, or made soft and plastic their original density. That is a God that is worth worshiping. That is a Father that the world may well be proud of: a God for the world to grow up toward, instead of a divine apology minimizing itself and accommodating itself to the world's pettiness.

I do not understand how any one, however loose in his thinking or careless and invertebrate in his

living, can give his thought to considerations of the kind just presented without experiencing a sort of inward bracing-up, stiffening-up, if you please, as though an infusion of iron had somehow been conveyed into the interior of his moral constitution. To men and women of the species that rather widely abounds, whose lives are rubber and their conception of divine things composed principally of unproductive elasticity, the contemplation of God as one who in the deep recesses of his being possesses more than the massive rockiness of the great hills and the high mountains, must come with the power of vast surprise, not unmingled with pain, even at the very moment that it throws the soul back upon itself in thoughtfulness and seriousness.

And the first thought of such a soul, if it is an honest and searching thought, will be: If God is not going to bend to me, then I shall have to bend to him or there can be no abiding peace between him and me, either present or eternal. That is what the child comes to before it is through with its struggle with the human father of the kind that I have been depicting. There are fathers that give up to the children,—unfortunate fathers, more unfortunate children,—fathers that relax the straight line of rectitude, that suspend the righteousness and the proper authoritativeness of fatherhood at the demand

of the young anarchists and nihilists that breed at the hearthstone.

But the other Father that we have to deal with is of different fiber. We and the mountains can meet together, but we have to go where the mountains are. We and God can meet together, but we have to go where God is. There is an old view of salvation, that I have seen dramatically acted out on the revivalistic stage, to the effect that Christ's office is to stand as a shield whereby man may be protected from the anger of God, and stand as a persuasive whereby God may be constrained to alter his attitude toward sinful man and to condone what his righteousness would have condemned had that righteousness not been plead with and reasoned with. But the word of Scripture is that "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself," not reconciling himself unto the world. God's moral inflexibility forbids his lowering himself to the level of sin, but there is no surrender of that inflexibility, but rather its assertion, in using means whereby the sinner may be lifted to the level of God's righteousness.

It is the same principle that operates in human fatherhood of the best type. The disobedience of the child creates a distance between it and its father. That distance is not going to be traversed by the father. If father and child get together again it will

be because the child has come to the father, not the father to the child. In the story of the Prodigal the wayward boy had to return from the far country to his home; the father did not move the home out into the far country. That feature of the story wherein the father is represented as watching for his boy's return and seeing him while he was still afar off, demonstrates graphically the mellowness and the yearning intensity of the parental affection; nevertheless he did not go to the boy; the boy had to come to him. There is inflexibility. There is rock. But there is no inconsistency between the granite ledge and the flowers that bloom just above it. The flowers help to disguise the rock and the rock helps to hold the flowers in steadiness and strength.

And that is the note upon which I desire that our meditation upon this first attribute of God should close—the rock helps to hold the flowers in steadiness and strength. Just as the solidity of the foundation of an edifice communicates itself to every part of the superstructure imposed upon it, so the rigidity, the unchangeableness that we may think of as the basal element in the divine character, enters to secure fixity and strong durability in every one of the divine qualities to which it gives support.

The element of which we are speaking enters into God's justice to render it adamantine. We know that

we can depend upon his doing right by us, dealing with us forever and ever upon principles of absolute righteousness. The full strength and determination of his infinite personality are in it. He can never do any wrong, neither can he ever regard sin with any degree of allowance. We might sometimes wish that he could and would, and, because some have encouraged themselves in imagining that he can and does, they have ceased to cherish for him the respect due to no one, either human or divine, who makes a convenience of his principles. To realize his unswerving holiness in character, act and dealing may not draw out our hearts toward him affectionately, but it challenges our respect, it holds our regard toward him reverently; if we have not learned to appreciate what Scripture calls the beauty of holiness, it impresses us by its solemn purity, and it sounds a note into harmonious accord with which we somehow feel that the music of the world will eventually be sung.

The element of which we are speaking enters, of course, into the structure and pursuance of all of God's purposes. With God planning means ultimate execution, for the entire massive rigidity of his personality is in what he sets himself toward. We believe that, and our life of service, service to our fellows and to our times, would be a far quieter, steadier, sweeter

service if only we realized it as well as believed it. It would correct our impulsiveness and hysteria; it would withdraw the chill from our anxieties and reconstruct our pessimism into cheerful and confident expectancy. We should drive our steeds with the glad assurance of the little child through whose hands the reins are passed but held in the grip of the charioteer who sits behind.

And then, best of all, or at any rate most comforting of all, this same element of God's unchangeableness, immense unchangeableness, enters into his love, making it massive and eternal.

There is a great difference in love. There is love that is irresolute; love that is passionate and burns itself out; love that is a misnomer for physical selfishness; love that puts a complexion upon life without entering deeply enough to weave itself into the tissues of life.

It is a great thing to be loved when the lover has invested himself in his love, even though it be but a human love. But when that lover is a divine lover, whose love is the giving himself in all his fullness and with that unvarying persistency of affection that means love clear out to the end,—a love that does not forget, that is never chilled, never becomes weary while the days pass and the centuries go by, then we can thank God that he is the Rock of Ages in whose

cleft we can abide, amid the vicissitudes of the present, and in the face of the vast unknown into the midst of which we are being hurried by the flight of the years.

The second feature of the divine character to be noted for the basal simplicity of its Old Testament representation is that of God's unity as opposed to any theory of tri-personality. This is a matter of concern to us, not from any mere academic or theologic interest in the questions involved, but because of its practical relation to us as preachers and to those that we preach to.

The custom has extensively prevailed, and in some quarters been industriously fostered, of making the acceptance of verbal statements of truth essential to entrance into the kingdom of our Lord. This has been a stumbling-block to many, and especially to those who have been intellectually disciplined, and whose natural tendency it therefore is to try to reduce the problems of the heavenly kingdom to their philosophic solution rather than to come in under the power of that kingdom and to become participant in its benefits and perquisites.

We are not questioning the honesty of the impulse prompting them to submit such problems to intellectual test, but we should all of us be reminded of this, that if the ability to construe and to translate

into the terms of human thought the doctrines of Christianity was essential to membership in Christ's kingdom, the system never would have been submitted by him to the acceptance of people in general, regardless of their condition of culture or of the lack of it, and especially would he never have indicated that to none are the doors of entrance into the kingdom so widely open as to the children. In such matters we are to accept the evident intention of Christ rather than the insistence of the professional theologian.

The harmful feature of the situation lies in this, that these statements, whether occurring outside of Scripture or inside of it, are treated as being in such way an inherent element of Christianity, that they require to be accepted; and not only that, but their significance understood before one's citizenship in the kingdom can be established. So that with the class of people that we are just now considering, years and years of suspended judgment go by, with the door of the kingdom perfectly open, and yet not entered because of the difficulty of bringing about an adjustment between human intelligence and the truths purporting to be offered to that intelligence.

Now assuming that these people are absolutely honest, we cannot ask them to accept any truth which they can accept only under mental protest.

We only confuse confusion by accepting in a formal way that which, with intellectual integrity, we decline. Enforced belief is no belief, and to cherish an enforced belief is to foster mental and moral disintegration. It is an attempt to project ourselves in two directions at the same time, and cleavage is certain to eventuate. It is just as necessary to be true to ourselves as to be true to the truth, and the former of the two conditions the latter.

A truth, no matter how true it be, is of value to us only to the degree in which it is adjustable to our mentality. It is like food which becomes to us a bit of nutriment only to the extent that it is digestible. That is not saying that it is not inherently nutritious, but that it is nutritious only up to the measure of the energy possessed by the digestive organs.

I look at a page of Chinese. One look is enough. But I do not curse it. I do not stamp upon it. I do not even deny it. I simply lay it one side. There may be mind in that page. There may be truth in that page although it doesn't look so. The page and myself do not get together. It and I clearly think our thoughts in different linguistic key. We cannot conclude that the page is foolish. The presumption is rather that there is meaning in it. But I turn it down, not because I am foolish, and not because I am wicked. I may be a good scholar; I may be fairly

respectable in character; I hope so; but I don't know Chinese. I simply am not up to it. Perhaps sometime I shall grow to it.

Now there is a great deal of Chinese in the Bible. And if there is anything divine about the book, there ought to be. Some time since I undertook to read a book that was learnedly occupied with discussing the constitution of matter. The volume opened in an easy way such that my thought, although not scientifically trained in such matters, could without much difficulty keep up with the author's presentation. But he soared to heights to which my unfledged wings declined to carry me, and the last three quarters of the volume had to remain unread. That much of it meant nothing to me. To say that I accepted the contents of the entire volume would signify nothing except that I presumed that the author knew what he was writing about. To say that I denied the truth of the last two hundred pages would have been a confession of my stupidity, for it would have been to claim that my mind was the measure of all truth and that whatever did not adjust itself to my intelligence thereby condemned itself as false.

A prominent educator from Eastern New England, who frequently exploits his rejection of certain doctrines set forth in the New Testament, has recently repeated himself and publicly denounced Justification

by Faith, Atonement and the Trinity. Now all that that really denotes is that those doctrines do not adjust themselves to his intelligence. They may be true, they may be false. But all that can be signified by his denial of them is that they refuse to gear into his mental machinery. That may be the fault of the doctrines; or it might be the fault of his machinery. The consciousness which he is known to have of the excellence of that machinery naturally leads him to attribute the fault to the doctrines.

If he had stopped with saying that the doctrines really meant nothing to him, as you would say upon looking at a page of Chinese, or in listening to an Indian address given in the language of the Choctaws, we would acquit him of presumption. But flatly and uncompromisingly to deny a positive proposition that has any degree of respectable authority back of it, is intellectual arrogance, for it is to lay claim to the possession of a mind that is itself the measure of truth; and there is only one Mind of whom that is predicable. It is neither prudent nor becoming to pronounce one's self in detailed terms of finality in regard to matters either scientific, ethical or religious.

Some room should always be left for expansion possible to be secured by later research or experience. The Church has been an offender at this point in its

relation to certain scientific theories, and in its dogmatic denial of their truth. If, when the leaders of the new astronomy announced the doctrine of the earth's revolution around the sun, the Church had been contented simply not to accept the theory instead of blankly denying it and castigating poor Galileo for suggesting it, the Church would have saved its credit and would have, in a way, promoted scientific investigation instead of doing what it has rather uniformly done, discouraged such investigation. It has been too much given to "knowing what isn't so," and denying what is so.

And it is the same kind of offense, only committed against religious doctrines instead of against scientific ones, that is practiced by men like the educator just mentioned, when they denounce a doctrine of religion, not simply leave it one side, but denounce it. One such doctrine is that which appears in evangelical phraseology under the title of the Trinity. This is accounted a troublesome doctrine. If by that is meant that it does not explain itself to human thought, I do not understand why it should be considered troublesome.

For even the world of common, everyday things that we live in the midst of, is at least nine tenths of it a mystery. For a thing not to be mysterious means mostly that we have become so accustomed to

it that we have forgotten that we do not understand it. Nobody is troubled about gravity, about the phenomena of electricity, about how it is that what we receive as bread becomes transmuted into flesh. Even science does not at all explain such things. All that it does is to tell us what exists, to state to us the facts. This would be a very wearisome world if we fretted ourselves about mundane mysteries in the way that some disquiet themselves over celestial ones.

It is certainly a very pleasant thing to be able to resolve a mystery into an idea that is thoroughly intelligible. Even if nothing more it is gratifying to our intellectual pride. We always feel better about ourselves when we have done a difficult thing. We acquire an added self-respect. But one of the charms of the world's arrangements is this, that we do not need ordinarily to understand things in order to get the benefit of them. Light is just as illuminating whether we have or have not given attention to the science of optics. Flowers are exactly as fragrant whether we are or are not botanists. It may not have occurred to you that that is one of the world's interesting and benevolent features.

It looks as though it were the Creator's thought that we were not going to have mind enough or time to secure mind enough to understand things and that

therefore he would shape them in a way to give us the comfort and the blessing of them even *without* the understanding of them.

Theologians spend considerable time seeking to penetrate the mysteries of spiritual realities, the nature of the Divine Being among other matters. Whether they know more about him than the rest of us, so far as pure intellectual discernment is concerned, is an open question. But it does not appear that they are made any better Christians by the fruits of their intellectual research. So that in religion, just as in botany and in optics and acoustics, matters are divinely shaped and engineered so as to yield us the blessing without a previous comprehension on our part of the mystery of the shaping and the engineering.

My earthly father, for example, was a kind of trinity of body, mind and spirit, but I never dissected him either with a scalpel or by my psychology; yet I did not on that account receive from him any less paternal benefit and blessing; rather more probably. The astronomers have latterly learned something as to the materials of which the sun is composed, but it does not result from that, that it fills our eyes with any more light than it did before, or that it warms the earth into any more abundant productiveness. That anything which purports to be a divine revela-

tion should contain intimations that put into a condition of query minds that have a natural passion for solving conundrums, whether human or divine ones, is entirely explicable.

One such suggestion is that of the existence in God of some sort of threefoldness. But it does not go beyond the point of suggestion, and the very variety of form under which it is made is sufficient indication that it is not important that we should have framed to our minds any definite conception of it. And nobody has any such definite conception, or if there be such an one who imagines that he has figured out the arithmetic of Deity, his very presumption convicts him of folly.

There is one thing, however, that at that point should not go without the saying, that whatever may be the solution of the problem of what we call the Trinity that solution cannot be expressed by saying, as the old catechism does, that there are three persons in the Trinity. That is polytheism; that sets before us three gods and is false to the genius of the Christian, as it is to the Jewish religion. That there is one only Being that can be called God is the fundamental doctrine of our holy faith. It is a doctrine to stand by, to be preached without any quiver or reservation in the sanctuary and woven into all the religious instruction given to the children. I had a triune

earthly father, but I had not three fathers. And it was of infinitely greater concern to me to realize the oneness of that father than it was to understand how the three elements that were in him could combine in one father. If my consciousness of him had engaged itself with the arithmetic of his nature instead of with the disclosures of himself that came to me out of the diverse and abounding fullness of that nature, then I should practically have been fatherless at the very moment that I was strenuously striving to comprehend the mystery of his manifoldness.

Studying the problems of Christianity is not itself Christianity, and does not prepare one to be a Christian, any more than studying optics helps a blind man to see. That is not to deny the interest that attaches to these problems nor the intellectual strength that comes from mentally grappling with them. But bright minds are making the mistake of their lives in trying to enter the kingdom of heaven over a roadway of clarified and settled doctrinal opinions in regard to questions which, from the very nature of the case, intelligences of the most gigantic type can hardly touch. Remembering our humanness it is sacrilege to attempt probing the mysteries of the divine nature.

It sometimes seems as though the apparently contradictory ways in which some of the deep sugges-

tions in Scripture are put are for the purpose of warning us away from the intricacies of the divine mind and constitution, as though to tell us that our only concern is with so much of heavenly light as falls easily and naturally into our eye and so much of heavenly warmth as wins unconstrained access to our heart, but that the foundations of it all and its unspeakable mechanism lie back undisclosed and unrevealed in God's own eternal consciousness.

And not only does the general tenor of Scripture carry that idea with it, but in instances we are definitely instructed that to construe or even to attempt to construe the great realities of God into terms of human thought and map out intellectually the varied regions of the Divine Being, is false to the purpose of revelation and utterly without the bounds of human faculty.

A marked instance of this is stated in Christ's own words as recorded in the eleventh chapter of Matthew, where he says, "No man knoweth the Son but the Father." Now if we take that for what it says, there is an end, or ought to be, of all fine argumentation, or imagination, or guesswork, about all such matters as the interrelation of what, rather presumptuously, perhaps, are called the members of the Trinity.

But as observed already, that does not prevent

my getting the benefit of it all. Personally I know nothing, absolutely nothing, about the sun in the sky, but when the sun rises I get the baptism of it, just as well as though I had some of it here and could take it into the chemical laboratory and analyze it.

And no one knows better than those whose thoughts are tied up into a hard knot, puzzling over the doctrine of the Trinity, that Christ's coming into the world was a kind of sun-rising in which, without at all giving to the intelligence of men an explanation either of himself or of Divine things generally, the Divine Life has come nearer to us, or we have come nearer to the Divine Life, and an impression left upon the soul which was not there before, as the risen sun creates darkness into light and warms the chill that has pervaded the night.

And the closer one keeps to Christ the brighter and warmer the light that he stands in and the fuller his sense of all those qualities that he believes to inhere in the character of God. Which is a way of saying that when I am in that posture God touches me. And when I say God touches me, I do not mean any delegated God but the original God, the only God there is. That is what I want, and all that I want or need. And in Christ or through Christ—use whichever preposition you prefer—I secure it. How it is that the one only true God made himself present

in Christ I do not know and it does not concern me to know. But whether in my devotions I address myself to him or to the Father, I am praying to absolutely the same person, the one only true God; I am not a polytheist.

That is a point to be guarded. There is a Christian polytheism that is dangerous. There are men who, in their anxiety not to be unitarians, attempt to worship three Gods, and are drawn away from the one only original by allowing themselves to become ensnarled in the web of a divine triplicity. I may be permitted to say that that was the experience of the late John Bigelow, as confessed in his posthumous volume, a religious complication, an apostasy to paganism, from which he was not recovered till far into his adult years. Orthodox unitarianism, with all its insufficiency, is better than trinitarian polytheism.

No one shall surpass us in our loyalty to Jesus Christ, but it is only to the one only true God who asserts himself in Jesus Christ that our loyalty is due. There is no room in Church or pulpit for anything less than honest evangelicism, but it must be an evangelicism that rests solidly on the basis of the one God, eternally one and immutable, without any mist thrown athwart the Divine Face by theological refinements or any confusion wrought in the human mind by philosophical discriminations.

VIII

THE SANCTUARY AND SANCTUARY SERVICE

It is the sanctuary that constitutes the focal point in the religious life of the community. Historically we know it to be so. Experimentally we feel it to be so. If we "have been planted in the house of God," we appreciate the significance of congregated worship. We have learned to know its reflex benefits, and to understand the philosophy of the Scriptural injunction "not to forsake the assembling of ourselves together."

All of this notwithstanding the fact that there is a certain element of formality in the appointment of stated places of convocation and in the erection and dedication of particular edifices specifically designated to the purpose, and notwithstanding the fact that it is one of the features of the Holy City come down from God that there is no temple to be found therein. But the gait at which we move in our religious life is not yet so spiritualized that we can afford to dispense with more or less of unspiritual crutch, and a stated place to worship, as well as a stated day upon which to worship, will continue for some time

still to be essential appurtenances of our Christian life.

Placing the emphasis, then, that we do upon the sanctuary, it is not possible that our attention should not at least be arrested by the claim that its influence is a diminishing one, and that while formerly those who were non-attendant at its services were the exception, now those who are attendant are the exception. That is the claim. It is not our purpose to argue for the claim or against it. Religion and arithmetic have very little to do with each other. The reduction of piety to the terms of the addition or multiplication table is not a fascinating proposition. Ecclesiastical statistics are the most indigestible of all religious pabulum. Figures will not lie, but liars figure. But more important than the question of increase or of decrease is the fact that there are a great many who are not church attendants. That fact is unquestionable and it is regrettable, although it should never be forgotten by those of us who love just such a sanctuary as that in which we are accustomed to gather, that the true and original tabernacle is after all the individual heart, and we can never tell how many there are who sincerely worship God in that hidden sanctuary who never meet with us in the temple made with hands.

Still, religion is not exclusively an individual

matter. It is also a social matter. It is an influence which, in bringing us nearer to God, in the same proportion brings us nearer to each other. It should also be mentioned that numbers accentuate the power of the spoken word. The hearts of listeners, like so many reverberatory surfaces, enlarge the volume of the word's influence. There is a deepening of impression that accrues from mutuality. The Apostle in writing to the Christians at Rome says, "I want to be comforted by the mutual faith both of you and me"; which is to say that a sense of one another's faith really conduces to an increase of each one's faith. It is a case where the larger the divisor the larger the quotient—not smaller.

So that till the circumstances of life change and till human nature changes, something which is at least akin to the existing form of sanctuary and preaching service will be almost a necessity of the religious experience of the individual and of the extension of Christ's power in the world. So that if it *is* the case that in the minds of people a diminishing emphasis is being laid upon sanctuary service, there is that in the situation which should render us, not apprehensive, but disposed to search out the grounds of so lamentable a tendency.

It need not be said that this situation has been made matter of frequent study and explained in a

variety of ways which, however, in general, do not seem to me to reach altogether to the fundamental point of difficulty.

The claim is liberally alleged that the pressure which is laid upon all classes and conditions of people by the urgency of the times excuses one from certain obligations that obtained when the six days were less filled than now with the cares and burdens of secular life. That is so usual a way of stating the situation that it need not be enlarged upon, except to say that, if the sanctuary and its services be to any degree efficient in stilling the distractions of the mind, and in equipping the soul for the warfare of life and in fortifying it against life's constant temptations, the severer the strain to which secular life subjects us, the *more* essential becomes the ministration which the sanctuary has to offer.

Somewhat more pertinent and striking more closely to the heart of the situation, is the reason offered for non-attendance at church by those who, upon comparing pulpit deliverance with such presentations of truth as are to be found in books, papers and magazines, find that the comparison favors the latter rather than the former, and that literature answers our needs quite as well as preaching, while involving less of expense and inconvenience.

So far as relates to the question of literary value,

both as regards the matter and form of what is printed, the pulpit has very much more to compete with than it had even fifty years ago. The pew was formerly quite dependent upon the pulpit for the material of its thinking. The parson did the thinking for the parish. Only the small minority of parishioners had opinions of their own. Pastorates not infrequently extended to fifty years, and at their close all those who had sat under the preacher's instruction had become his larger or smaller duplicates in point of doctrine and practice.

Literature is now as abundant as it was then rare, and as attractive as it was then forbidding. Everyone, almost, thinks his own thoughts. Even the children frame a philosophy of their own and begin to cherish their little theological heresies before they have entered their teens. How many there are who have been so trained in the art of thinking as to be able to think well and to the purpose, is a question by itself; for one cannot think with effect without having been disciplined to it, any more than one can sing well or paint well without having been trained to it. Nevertheless, minds all about us are at work, either systematically or fantastically, and reading, which might be called thinking with a crutch,—leaning upon some one's else mind,—is the common habit of all classes, ages, sexes and conditions.

That, then, is the situation which the pulpit has at present to face as compared with what it was a half century ago; and although we have what we like to call an educated and a cultivated ministry, yet there are few, if any, congregations in which there are not laymen at whose feet the clergyman could afford to sit in all quietude and docility. Not the intellectual ability, the orthodoxy, not even the piety of the pulpit afford, then, sufficient grounds upon which to base the claims of sanctuary service.

Bearing upon our matter there are two principles requiring to be stated, to which, when fairly set forth, cordial assent will, I believe, be accorded.

First. Only a portion of the results deserving to be accomplished by the service of the sanctuary is due to the intellectual ability of the pulpit or the intellectual appreciation of the pew.

The charge that is to be brought against the theology in which some of the older ones of us were reared, or rather, perhaps, against the mode in which it used to be presented from what was then called "the sacred desk," was not that it was too strenuous in its pursuit of the truth or too emphatic in its enunciation of truth, but that while it put a highly educational strain upon the mental faculties of the hearers, it afforded too little play for those other energies of the soul,—its love, its sympathies, its

sweet and holy confidences in the goodness and shepherding care of God,—energies which remain inert so long as the atmosphere is one of cold intellectuality, and which begin to show signs of life and movement only when the sharp edges of truth have been mellowed by the touch of a warmer impulse.

One Sabbath, Dr. William Adams, first pastor of the Madison Square Church, had with him in the pulpit a Pennsylvania divine, who preached the discourse. At its completion the Philadelphian, upon sitting down, turned and remarked to Dr Adams, "That is what I call the very bones of the gospel." "Yes," gently retorted Dr. Adams, "but we like a little flesh on ours."

It is by the cultivation of sweet Christian sentiment as much as by the inculcation of strong religious doctrine that the sanctuary accomplishes its mission. Judging from the example of our Lord's dealings with his disciples, it seems prudent to go even a step farther, and to claim that the softening of the heart and the quickening of sentiment must *precede* the indoctrinating of the mind. People do not commence putting seed into the ground until after the frost is out and the soil has been so far warmed as to give to the seed a loving reception. And the soul works in line with the operations of nature.

It was as much because Christ cultivated the

tenderness of his disciples as because he stimulated their understandings that he was able to lodge in them the truths of the gospel, and he wrought in them gentleness of feeling before he began his work of seed-sowing.

The gospel is quite as much an expression of the heart of God as of his mind. So that a sanctuary service, in order to be true to the *spirit* of the gospel, must move primarily in an atmosphere of feeling rather than exclusively in one of thought. It is, or should be, a nursery for the growing of religious affections, so that any amount of keen mentality that the preacher may possess, or any amount of intellectual nutriment that his congregation may secure from outside sources, affect in no wise the need that people are under of entering the sanctuary and sharing in its service, provided its spiritual atmosphere be of a temperature to develop the delicate impulses of religious emotion, affectionate and trustful reverence toward God and love toward man. In order to a winning and successful service, it is as essential to have produced a mellow spiritual temperature in order that men's hearts may be warm as it is to have a good fire kept up in the furnace in order that their feet may be warm.

Hence the need there is that our sanctuary prayers should move in the region of the sensibilities of our

people, and that the holy office should be used not to the end of indirectly conveying moral lessons to the pew-holders or of imparting information to God, but as a means of gathering the Great Spirit and our own smaller spirits within the bonds of reverent and sympathetic fellowship and companionship.

I have no love for and very little respect for the aridity and frigidity of a good deal of existing sanctuary service. I believe in introducing just as much form as can possibly be made the vehicle of spiritual influence. People love it, and within the limits just specified the more of it the better. It is both a rest and an impulse. I have experimented with the matter for thirty-one years. In '80 I began with the old-fashioned three-hymned service. Even the introduction of the Lord's prayer was offensive to one or two members, as being a leaning in the direction of Papacy. We have a ritual now that combines the dignity of the Presbyterian cult and the grace of the Episcopal. The old-fashioned truth is preached but the bones are kept well covered. Next to the Holy Spirit the preacher's main stay is his choir, whose services are secured not at all with a view to giving us a Sunday concert, but rather and exclusively to the end of touching and stimulating those hidden fountains of reverent devotion and tender sentiment toward God and man which can never be so directly

reached or so gently and yet powerfully stimulated as by music when rendered by those who combine the gift of song with the spirit of worship. There is nothing to indicate that there will be any preaching in heaven. Music is the only art that is enrolled among the attractions of the celestial world.

In this great matter of rendering the services of the sanctuary attractive, the second point to which I wish to advert is that of the preacher and his pulpit deliverances, in particular the peculiar quality that ought to distinguish those deliverances because of the unique experience by which it is to be assumed that those deliverances will be inspired.

John the Baptist, in his singular and desolate wilderness sanctuary, was able to draw the multitudes to his preaching because he was able to tell them something which they did not know, something which they needed and were interested to know, and something which he was able to state to them with authority and as from a source from which they themselves were not able to draw. He worked in the exercise of the prophetic office.

The prophet is not so much the man who foretells as the one who has a differing experience from most, an experience which carries him farther into the reality of things than most are carried, which disentangles him from the complication of what is

ordinary and confused, and qualifies him to speak from a standpoint so far raised above the common and perplexed point of view as to exhibit facts and truths in their just perspective, and moreover to do it with that clear and unmistakable consciousness of vision that carries with it its own certification.

In the transfiguration scene the disciples for the first time beheld their Lord in his true relations to the celestial world. Only imagination can conceive the effect wrought upon them by this dazzling disclosure of his heavenly connections, or the distinct epoch that would be thereby created in the history of their belief in him. Although the revelation was comparatively but momentary, yet there was the revelation. The Lord for an instant stood before them in the manifest light of God. A glory that was neither from land nor sea had touched his face with a complexion that betrayed his kinship with the Great Spirit above and his citizenship in regions that were far abroad.

And the meaning of the scene in something of the immensity of its import entered their souls, and recorded itself there in lines that were ineffaceable. Whatever the scene of distress and humiliation through which they might subsequently see him pass, there still remained in them indelibly printed the memory of the day when they had seen him stand

upon the Mount, close in under the cover of the sky, enveloped with a splendor which nature could not explain and in the midst of companionship whose belongings were in the great years and in the realm supernal. It was a great moment, great in its instant impression upon them, great in its indestructible hold upon them.

What it signified at the moment to the three disciples that witnessed it and what it continued to denote as a permanent element in their experience, we can easily infer from the language subsequently used by one of them who wrote: "For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eye-witnesses of his majesty. For he received from God the Father honor and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the sublime glory [that is, from God], This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased: and this voice which came from heaven we heard, and were with him in the Holy Mount." You perceive how that impression had stayed by, how it had worked in the mind of him who had witnessed the great transaction, and had become a fixed factor in his own realization, and made him forever competent to speak a strong word, so full of conscious truth as to cut a broad swath of irresistible persuasion whenever the word was spoken. It was

the glimpse that the Apostle gained, on that transfiguration day, of a profound world underlying, overlying, enveloping the common shows of things, that made the Apostle great, widening him a little to the width of the spiritual universe that was for a moment uncovered to him, enabling him to interpret facts in all their high and brilliant import and to assert those facts with an assurance begotten of a searching experience.

What we have just tried to state is a necessary prerequisite to all fine living, large speaking and great working. The powerful doers of the Bible, old and new, had something shown to them before they commenced work. The chieftains of events may have had to live on low ground, but they would never have been able to become chieftains if at some time something had not come into their eye that low ground never would have lain near enough to the sky to be able to show them. Moses had been doing small things, tending sheep and other paltry business, too pusillanimous ever to have gone upon the record, for eighty years before the vision of God came to him in the flame at Horeb, and then for the first time the true life of the great general, lawgiver and statesman began. That bush introduced Moses to the world because it introduced the world to Moses, the great world I mean, that world that is made up of

eternal meanings, and which holds in its vast embrace this small globe of rock, forest and ocean as a tiny island is held in the lap of the sea.

Whether in that scene at Horeb Moses heard God's voice is not so important. We must allow a good deal of margin for the pictorial tendencies of a picturesque age. There is no harm in thinking of some olden parts of the early Bible as being picture-book—remembering though that there may be just as much truth in a picture as in a paragraph, perhaps more.

But whether that Horeb chapter is prose, poetry or painting, Moses found himself at the frontier, at the point where the lights from below are met by the lights that sift in from the other way, and he began then to be Moses. And the light sifting in from the other way put that celestial complexion upon things that read into them their great meanings, as the transfiguring light upon the Holy Mount wrought God's complexion upon the face of the man Christ Jesus and to the three stricken disciples revealed the man, in what Peter calls his majesty. It is much to see things in their majesty.

Even our Lord, as it would seem, never stepped forth upon his career of active service till there came to him at the Jordan that great revelation, that opening of the sky above him, in whose interpretative

light his own being became disclosed to him, and his relation to God and to man set forth under a transfiguring illumination. The small significance of things will not answer. There is a great deal of splendor in them if the lights are arranged in such a way as to strike them from above, and coax out their larger import. Even pictures that seem common develop wonderfully when properly placed and seen in an atmosphere that is richly luminous.

St. Paul's real life commenced with seeing what he called a great "light." It would be of no particular advantage to try to probe the mysteries of that event. Excited emotions may to some extent have furnished the colors in which he portrayed the scene that transpired on the way to Damascus, but there was in some way and at that time a great uncovering to his eyes, or to his heart, of what had before been concealed.

Whether it was that his powers of vision, spiritual vision, were unnaturally strengthened or that by some means the atmosphere, in which the activities of mind operate, was conveniently cleansed of whatever tends to impede those activities, is of little importance. But it is sufficiently evident from what he himself tells us of the event, and from the entirely new tone and direction communicated to his life by that event, that altogether a new world was at that

time disclosed to him; not that things were changed, but that a celestial complexion was put upon them, a heavenly significance communicated to them, and they stood forth before him transfigured in the glow of the mystic illumination.

The reports preserved to us of such experiences have oftentimes to be discounted, but that will have to depend mostly upon the general quality and structure of the person of whom the experiences are predicated. That Abraham was a man of such fiber and proportions as to be able to dominate religiously the forty centuries that have intervened between his day and our own would seem to be rather convincing endorsement of his claim to have stood at one time where both ground and sky were brightened by the ineffable Presence, and where even the long track of the ages to come lay out partly disclosed to him under the transfiguring light that fell upon that track from above.

That Moses was a man of such grasp upon the moral foundation of things, having a moral intuition so keen in perforating the very tissue of character and act that his ethical system today, after so long a time, still lies at the basis of our own moral structure of duty as between man and man, and man and God,—all of this creates a tremendous presumption in support of his claim that he wrought not alone by

the light of a candle humanly kindled; a tremendous presumption that he was warranted in insisting that his ethical code was a quotation from the mind of God; and that it was because human relations of obligation stood out before his eye under the glow of a heavenly transfigurement that he was able to state those relations in a way that should be true to the finest conscience of the finest men for a period of 3,500 years.

Men who can do that have got to be believed. Likewise of the man St. Paul, that rugged old Apostle to the Gentiles. Words that such people speak, claims that such people make, will have to be taken at their face value. When you bethink yourself of the fact that nineteen centuries of strong religious thinking rest down complacently upon the massive propositions enunciated by St. Paul, it is silly to the point of imbecility to deny the validity of a light so intense as to singe his bodily eyes into temporary blindness, to have come, as he tells us in his Corinthian letter, within reach of utterances incapable of being translated into terms of any earthly vocabulary.

These are some of the facts of our holy religion and attested by the testimony of men who have been too practical in all their dominance of historic event, too self-contained in all their administrative life to

be obnoxious to the charge of either insanity or delusion. You may not have seen a great light but St. Paul did, or nineteen hundred years of great doctrinal thinking are the mere baseless fabric of a dream. You may not have seen the clouds parted above you and a radiant avenue opened before you into the realm celestial, but Jesus did, or the great Christian era with all of light, love and power in it that we call Christian is an unfounded stupidity shared in by millions of what purported to be intelligent souls, but who were all of them the dupes of a silly fancy when they lived and the victims of a crazy delusion when they died.

The declarations of men like Paul, Jesus, Moses and Abraham, who have marshaled the centuries by the power of their thought and life, are not declarations that you can finger and sort over and blot out at the impulse of a jejune cynicism. It is not credulity to bank on the utterances of such men; it is incredulity not to bank on them. The average man may not have had their experiences, but what is the average man that he presumes to blue-pencil the unequivocal declarations of men who have moved as giants in the midst of the years, masters of events and creators of destiny?

And so we come back to it that it was the glimpse of great things, touches of transfiguration, beholden

by men who once in a while stood at the frontier where the light from the ground was met by the light that beamed from on high, that was the secret of their long thinking and great working.

It is much to stand down in the valley of a beautiful landscape and to imagine the distant course of the rivers and to fancy the miles of stimulating prospect that must lie out, an easy picture to the eye of one who looks upon it from the heights. But it is a distinct thing to stand upon those heights, to live in the companionship of the lofty places of the earth and follow with an easy vision the long lines of the rivers that like glistening threads of silver wind in and out among the hills.

Such transfigurement is fraught with unspeakable stimulus, even when it is merely mountains and forests that are interpreted by the light that falls upon them from a superior altitude. And how much more when it is the features of a moral and spiritual landscape that are passing under review—when it is duties not things, men and not rocks, processes of history and not geography, souls and the life and destinies of souls and not material impersonalities that are to be interpreted and valued in the transfiguring light that cometh from above.

Prophets require no credentials, and are always in demand. When Elijah confronted Ahab and pre-

faced his declaration to him with the words, "As the Lord God of Israel liveth, before whom I stand," Ahab asked no questions, entered into no argument, attempted no disproof of the authority with which Elijah spoke. The character with which a preacher is popularly credited is that he is a layman who has been instructed along theological lines. That does not make a prophet of him. Second-hand knowledge does not count—not in the great things of life.

The only things that persuade are the things that come from the heart that knows. The words that came from Moses have been the foundation of civilization for three millenniums and a half, and he did not secure them by probing the wisdom of Egypt or by digging in the sands of the wilderness. He swayed the wild men that he brought with him out of Egypt because his conferences were with the powers above, whom they but imperfectly knew, but whom they knew that *he* knew. They felt in him the authenticity of the word that he brought. They appreciated in his utterances the flavor of the thunder-resounding and the lightning-stricken mountain down out of which he brought his message. They never disputed the Decalogue. They accepted *it* because they accepted *him*, and because they believed that he had been up where things of that kind grow.

"This is life eternal that they might know thee, O

God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent," and such a lesson as that surely is one which has no final chapter. How far along in the series of its chapters men and women, who are necessarily burdened and stricken with the cares and the exhausting business of life, ought to advance, is something for each to determine for himself; but the preacher is bound by the obligations of his prophetic office to have stepped far enough on in advance of his people to tell them of things which they have not yet seen, and so, little by little, to entice their vision toward the prospect always opening itself out more and more clearly to us as we go on.

The secret of the power and work of St. Paul is expressed in his words, "Neither did I receive the gospel from man, nor was I taught it, but it came to me through revelation of Jesus Christ." In that, too, lies the secret of his fascination and his ability to draw human thought to him and to compel its confidence in him.

I am afraid that we have read his letters so much or that we read them with so little insight into their contents, as to fail of feeling how alive every sentence of his is with his own personal experience. There is no suggestion of hearsay about them. He is felt to be speaking with authority, and such authoritativeness the world believes in and gathers to it.

He was himself in all that he says. If it is love that he is talking about, we know that the whole track of his thought is lit up with the love wherewith he *himself* loves. He never has to quote. If he touches upon the realities of the world invisible, we feel that at the very moment, when he was writing, his own eye was wide open to the realities of that world and sensitively and almost painfully filled with them. We know that he is not doing into words of his own some report of unseen realities that another has made over to him.

His own heart distinctly touched the object it described, the truth it relates. There is no suggestion of inference in what he declares. He does not say that this is true—major premise—and that is true—minor premise—*therefore* something else is true. There are with him no "therefores." Realities stand out to him in their own light. There was nothing second-hand about his deliverances, so that the vitality of them has struck into the hearts of people and dominated religious thought for almost a score of centuries. People have eyes for what is direct and ears for what is original.

In the clause just quoted, he tells his Galatian readers that the gospel he has been preaching to them is not something that he picked up at school and then went upon the platform with it, or into the

pulpit with it. He tells them that his ability to address to them long discourses is not due to any long memory of his, or to the gospel material with which that memory of his had been crammed. People are not slow to appreciate the magnitude of the work he did for the world, and for the centuries, but are not closely attending to it that it is what he is here saying about himself that made him *able* to do it.

I meet with students who are looking forward to the Christian ministry, and who are deeply agitated over the question as to where they shall take their preliminary course, and under what set of instructors they shall be taught concerning Christ and his gospel.

It is not my thought that we should urge them to keep away from such instruction, but it is clear that we ought to remind them that there are things that never can be learned by such means, that the things that make out almost the whole of a man's true equipment for the Christian ministry cannot be learned by such means, and that St. Paul, the consummate preacher of the Christian era, not only never depended upon such opportunities, but wanted it definitely understood that he never did.

He could have attended a school of the prophets and learned a great deal *about* the Lord, but to know a great deal *about* the Lord is one thing, and to know

the Lord is a different thing. We might go into a cave lit with a tallow candle, and spend forty years fathoming profound treatises upon the sun and stars, and yet in all those years gain less that would make us stirring expositors of the splendors of the firmament than one moment's contemplation of the rising sun or of the winter constellations. People always believe in the man "that has been there" and will follow him even into the wilderness. It is difficult to be greatly moved by the deliverances of a mocking bird.

Therein then lies the power of the pulpit, in the ungrazed pastures of spiritual and heavenly truth into which the prophet-shepherd, going on before, leads his flocks. There is a quantity of unpardonable nonsense perpetrated upon the question why the masses do not throng the churches. It is not the fault of the masses. People will fill the churches as fast as God fills the ministers.

If it *be* the case that there is decay in attendance upon sanctuary service, it is because there is decay in the exercise of the prophetic function of the pulpit, and because the shepherd moves in the midst of the sheep instead of going before them and leading them forth into uncropped fields. Moses could lead his people because of the region of higher light in which he walked, and which came to him first in the flames of

the Burning Bush. John the Baptist could stir the heart of Jerusalem and of all Judea, because his own ear was tuned to disclosures which they unconsciously had wanted to know, but which they had been either too busy or insufficiently sensitive to discover. In the Mount of Transfiguration the three disciples had uncovered to them a mysterious world that lay out of reach of ordinary vision, but a world whose spirit and power were a strange but enticing element in all the message which they afterward delivered to the people. The light which flashed upon St. Paul when he was on the way to Damascus never faded out of the eye of the old Prophet-Apostle, and somewhat of the touch and caress of that light came into the experience of those who afterward waited upon his word.

These are all of them Scripture examples of a permanent truth. The secret of pulpit power and the secret of sanctuary attractiveness must always remain what it was in the days of the old prophets and apostles, that it is a place where the souls of the people have their vision uncovered to an always newer and fresher prospect of the great things of life and God. People will always gather under a cloud and look up, if only there be a rift in that cloud allowing a little farther entrance into the light celestial.

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